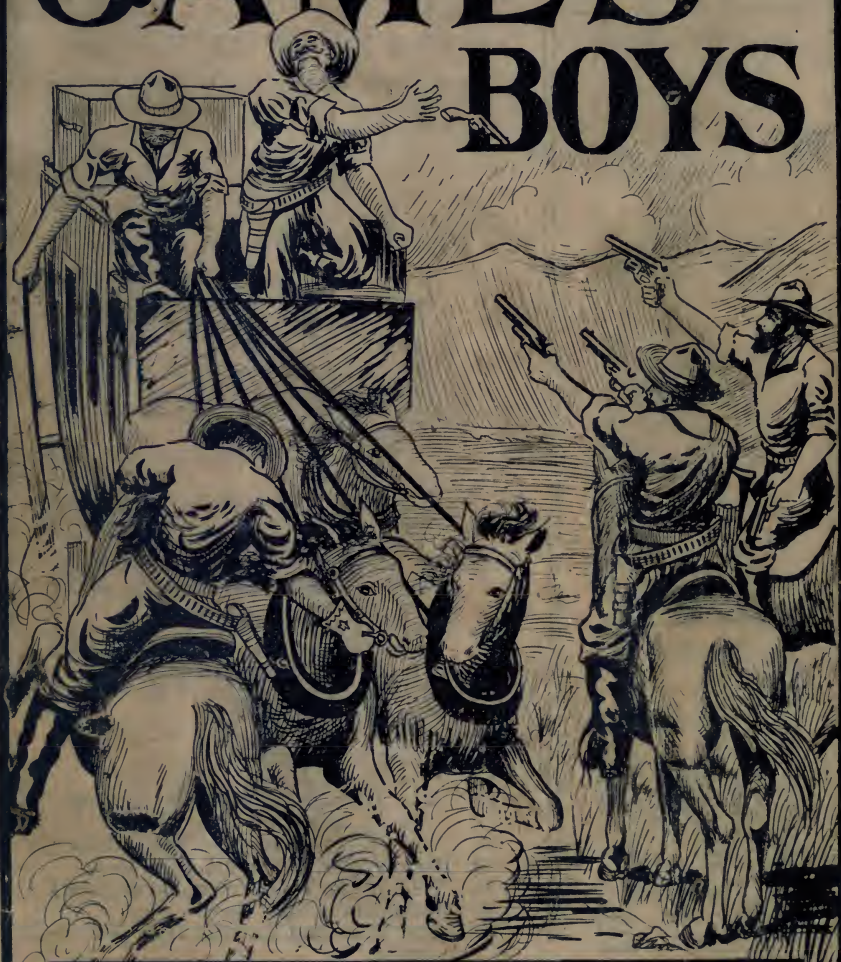


# JAMES BOYS



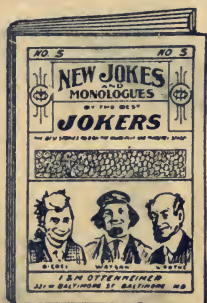
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# JAMES BOYS

## DEEDS OF DARING

By JAMES EDGAR

A COMPLETE RECORD OF THEIR LIVES AND DEATHS,  
NARRATING MANY OF THEIR STIRRING ADVENTURES,  
WHICH HAVE ONLY RECENTLY COME TO LIGHT,  
AND WHICH HAVE NEVER APPEARED  
IN PRINT BEFORE

COMPILED IN THEIR HOME STATE—MISSOURI

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I. & M. OTTENHEIMER

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## PREFACE

Stories of the life of the highwayman, bandit and train-robber, with the romance of deadly adventure entwined about his life, have ever fascinated the novelist and reader alike, and the tales of his daring have ever proven of absorbing interest to both young and old, despite the fact that his deeds were criminal, and on the principal of "the mills of the gods grind slowly, but they grind exceedingly fine," his punishment by imprisonment or death surely awaits him at the end of his career.

Robin Hood and his merry band of robbers of Nottingham Forest have been the theme of song and story for a century or more. Dick Turpin and Jack Sheppard, the dashing highwaymen, have furnished material for many tales of romance and daring. Captain Kidd and Blackbeard, the pirates, have furnished material for volumes of thrilling reading, and so through all times and ages the desperado has alike horrified and fascinated, in many instances combining some good with bad in the roving, dangerous life he led.

Among all the annals of soul-stirring adventure and desperate achievements in the history of the highwaymen of the world the James Brothers—Jesse and Frank—undoubtedly stand at the head. They committed more daring robberies than all the other outlaws of the world combined, and while they lived, a perfect reign of terror prevailed among those whom circumstances placed them at their mercy.

But the last of the bad men of the West have passed away. Nevermore will the equal of the James Boys be heard of again. This latest and perhaps last book of their lives will recount in new form many of their famous accomplishments as robbers of high degree, and will perpetuate some of their deeds which have come to light of recent years and which have not appeared in print before. It will appear in the form of a galaxy of short stories—now so popular with magazine readers—each a complete narrative in itself; an act from the drama of real life, which is stranger than fiction.

**JAMES EDGAR**

**The Author**

# JAMES BOYS DEEDS OF DARING

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE JAMES BOYS' EARLY HISTORY.

BIRTHPLACE OF THE FAMOUS OUTLAWS AND THE HISTORY OF THEIR EARLY CHILDHOOD AND GROWTH TO MANHOOD—THEY WERE A PREACHER'S SONS—HOW THEY BECAME OUTLAWS IN THE WEST.

Strange as it may seem, the James Boys—Frank and Jesse—the most desperate and murderous of all bandits, were the sons of a minister of the gospel, whose early training of them was of the best and whose home influences were in no manner such as would have set them on a bad career.

Frank was the oldest of the two and was born in Scott county, Kentucky, in 1845. His folks later moved to Clay county, Missouri, where Jesse was born in 1849. Before he was a year old his father became enthused with the gold fever, and, bidding his little family good-bye, went west to seek his fortune. He never returned, but died on the Pacific Coast. His name was the Rev. Robert James and he was a regularly ordained minister of the Baptist faith.

But though he was responsible for these inhuman

plunderers of their fellow-men being brought into existence, he was in no way responsible for their education in the school of crime, or the shaping of their desperate characters.

It were idle to discuss what might have been the career of Frank and Jesse James had not death deprived them of a father's care and admonition in early infancy. From what little is known of the life and character of that father it is safe to conclude that it would have made but little if any difference to the boys; for the *mother* was the ruling spirit in that household, and in any event would have exerted the dominant influence in shaping the characters of her sons.

An old proverb says, "Like father, like son," but history establishes the fact that most of the remarkable men that the world has produced received their characters from their mother. Frank and Jesse James were no exception to the rule.

In many respects Mrs. Zerelda Cole James was a remarkable woman, and it is probably as natural that she should have given birth to Frank and Jesse James as that Cornelia, the famous Roman matron, should have been the mother of the Gracchi.

Mrs. James has been represented by certain self-styled "compilers" of the lives and exploits of the James boys as being little short of a brutal, uncivilized Amazon. Such misrepresentation is uncalled for as it is untrue. No one who knows anything about the personal life and character of the noted bandits'

mother would make any such outrageous, because unfounded, assertion.

Mrs. James belonged to a respectable and well-to-do family, and though by no means a model of meekness, she could not truthfully be called a termagant.

While she could not be considered of a refined and gentle disposition, she had the reputation among her neighbors of being a kind and helpful friend and an affectionate and only too indulgent mother.

If, like the famous Roman matron, her character was cast in an iron mold, and her temper and bearing were stern and imperious, so too, like the Roman mother, she idolized her sons and in her heart said of them, "These are my jewels." Indeed, so wrapped up in her boys was she that she believed that, like a king, they could do no wrong.

This rare but misplaced confidence which their mother had in them was fully reciprocated by them, for although no matter how bad they became, they always respected and loved her whom was responsible for their being. This was their one virtue, linked as it was with a thousand crimes.

Being left by the death of her husband with a family of four children, two boys and two girls, to provide for single handed, Mrs. James had to struggle pretty hard for a number of years. She sent the children to school, and did the best she knew how to train them up in the way they should go. But as she lacked tenderness and feeling herself, she failed to inspire it in her children, the boys especially.

Then came the outbreaks among the mountaineers, who formed themselves into factions, and between which factions feuds ensued. The seeds of the war were brewing and the hearts of the young James boys became imbued with the spirit of war.

Everybody in the border counties sided with one or the other party of marauders. The excitement was intense. The mother of the James Boys was distinctly Southern in her sentiments, and her boys were with her "tooth and toenail" at the outbreak of the war, and Frank and Jesse James were among the first to join the guerrillas.

At the beginning of hostilities, in 1861, the border warfare increased in virulency, and the sympathizers were forced into extreme measures. The "Border Ruffians" were now termed guerrillas, among the most noted of whose leaders was Charles William Quantrell.

Quantrell is said to have been the most heartless, blood-thirsty marauder that ever lived in any country.

As Frank and Jesse James were introduced to guerrilla life and started on their career of crime by this celebrated guerrilla chieftain, it may be of interest to the reader to know something of his history and the causes which made him the inhuman dare-devil ruffian he was.

Charles William Quantrell was born in Hagerstown, Maryland, July 20, 1836. While Charles was yet a boy in his teens his father died, and shortly afterward the family moved to Cleveland, Ohio, where Charles



and a brother several years older attended school. Shortly after they arrived in Cleveland the mother died; the older brother moved to Kansas, but Charles continued to attend school in the Ohio city. For several years he paid his way in Cleveland by doing odd jobs out of school hours, and was progressing finely in his studies. His habits were good and he was respected by all who knew him. In 1856 his brother wrote him from Kansas that he was about to start on a trip to California to seek his fortune in the new Eldorado of the Pacific coast, and he would like to have Charles accompany him. Although much attached to his friends in Cleveland, and anxious to complete his education in the splendid schools of that city, Charles had such affection and confidence in his brother that he could not resist the latter's appeal. So, bidding his friends and schoolmates good-bye, young Quantrell joined his older brother in Kansas.

The exciting accounts of the dare-devil doings of Quantrell and his chosen band of guerrillas, which the papers published with glaring headlines at the commencement of the war, sent a thrill of feverish excitement through the nation, and many a youth in Missouri burned to be enrolled under the folds of the black flag of Quantrell's guerrillas.

Jesse James was among them. His brother Frank was already with Quantrell. Jesse made repeated and persistent efforts to join the band, but was rejected by Quantrell on account of his youth, he being then but little over fourteen years of age.

The sympathies of his mother and step-father, Dr. Samuels, whom she had recently married, were all with the South. Mrs. Samuels, especially, was loyal to the Confederacy. By various means she managed to learn of the movements of the Union troops, and whenever the information was important she would mount Jesse upon a fleet horse and send him to Quantrell. So open and obnoxious was Mrs. Samuels in her demonstrations to Southern love that the Federal militiamen began to notice it. From mere notice suspicion was aroused.

Her house was watched and it became known that several secret midnight conclaves had been held there.

The part played by Jesse and the open and decided expressions frequently made by Dr. Samuels and his decidedly demonstrative wife greatly excited the Federal soldiers, and it was determined to make an example of the family. Accordingly, in June, 1862, a company of Missouri militia approached the Samuels homestead, which is near Kearney, in Clay county, and, first meeting Dr. Samuels, they addressed him in language that could leave no doubt in his mind that they meant to carry affairs to the bitter end. It was in vain he pleaded that he was leading a peaceful farmer's life, and didn't desire to be mixed up in the strife of the time. They told him—what he knew much better than they did—that he and his whole family were in secret alliance with Quantrell and his followers. Frank was at the camp, Susie was away from home, Jesse was plowing in the fields. Mrs.

Samuels was nowhere to be seen. But she saw all that was going on, just the same.

They had not come unprepared for their work. A strong rope was produced, with which he was securely pinioned, and then led away from the house a distance of about one hundred yards. Here the rope was fastened in a noose around his neck, while the other end was thrown over the limb of a tree, and several men hastily drew him up and left him suspended to choke to death. Mrs. Samuels, however, had followed stealthily, and the moment the militia had departed she rushed to the rescue of her husband, whom she hastily cut down, and by patient nursing brought him back to life. The James Boys made good their escape before the invaders could capture them, but determined on revenge, and to get it was ever afterward their constant thought.

When Quantrell organized his band of Border Ruffians to avenge the murder of his brother he never dreamed that he would ever have to fight the soldiers of the United States in addition to the murderous Jayhawkers. But when the Civil War began the Jayhawkers, being Abolitionists, were all ranged on the side of the Union, while the "Ruffians," being pro-slavery, sided with the South, and Quantrell and his band found themselves more often pitted against the boys in blue than against the Jayhawkers.

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siasm. Up to the time when young Jesse James was accepted as a member of the band the guerrillas had been engaged in but few skirmishes, their services consisting chiefly in small foraging expeditions, making themselves thoroughly acquainted with the topography of the country, preparatory to engaging in more effective measures.

The town of Richfield, on the northern bank of the Missouri River, was occupied by a squad of thirty Federal soldiers, under the command of Captain Sessions. Quantrell determined to attack this garrison, and detailed a small company of his most intrepid guerrillas to make a dashing raid on the town.

Frank and Jesse James were among the number, Frank James leading the attack.

The garrison was taken by surprise and a desperate conflict ensued.

Ten of the Federals were killed, including Captain Sessions, and the remainder taken prisoners.

When the attacking party returned to their company Jesse James was sent out with orders from Quantrell to scour the counties adjoining Clay and locate the militia.

After passing through Clinton county he paid a short visit to his mother, who received him with many manifestations of pleasure, and then began to unload herself of the valuable information she had gathered for the benefit of the guerrillas. She told him that the attack on Richfield had resulted in

massing the militia for a determined stroke, and that the troops were concentrating near that point; that Plattsburg had been almost entirely relieved of its garrison and would fall an easy prey to the guerrillas if they chose to profit by the opportunity.

Jesse lost no time in communicating the situation to Quantrell, and, accordingly, three days after the capture of the squad of militiamen at Richfield Captain Scott took fifteen men and silently stole upon Plattsburg, which he found defended by less than a score of Federals.

Shortly after the scheme materialized to sack the town of Lawrence, Kansas. Quantrell consulted with his chief lieutenants, the James boys, and they heartily backed him up in the scheme, Quantrell did not neglect to inform his followers of the danger such an undertaking involved; that their road would be infested with militia, the forces of which would be daily augmented when the first intimation of the purposes of the guerrillas should be made known; that it would be ceaseless fighting and countless hardships, and many would be left upon the prairies to fester in the sun. He then called his command to arms and acquainted every man with the decision in the following speech: "Fellow-soldiers, a consultation just held with several of my comrades has resulted in a decision that we break camp tomorrow and take up a line of march for Lawrence, Kansas; that we attack that town, and, if pressed too hard, lay it in ashes. This undertak-

ing, let me assure you, is hazardous in the extreme. The territory through which we must pass is full of enemies, and the entire way will be beset by well-armed men, through whom it will be necessary for us to carve our way. I know full well that there is not a man in my command who fears a foe; that no braver force ever existed than it is my honor to lead; but you have never encountered danger so great as we will have to meet on our way to Lawrence; therefore, let me say to you, without doubting in the least your heroism, if there are any in my command who would prefer not to stake their lives in such a dangerous attempt, let them step outside the ranks."

At the conclusion of Quantrell's remarks a shout went up from every man, "On to Lawrence!" Not a face blanched, but, on the other hand, there was but one desire, to lay waste the city on the Kaw.

On the following day the order was given to "mount," and with that dreadful black flag streaming over their heads the command, two hundred strong, turned their faces to the west. As they crossed the Kansas line at the small town of Aubrey, in Johnson county, Quantrell compelled three men, whom he found sitting in front of a small store kept by John Beeson, to accompany him as guides.

The command passed through Johnson county midway between Olathe and Spring Hill, and through the northern part of Franklin county. When they reached Cole creek, eight miles from



Lawrence, the three guides were taken into a clump of thick woods and shot by Jesse and Frank James.

One of the party, an elderly man, begged piteously to be spared, reminding his executioners that he had never done them any wrong, but his prayers for mercy ended in the death rattle as a bullet went crashing through his neck.

Quantrell had been agreeably mistaken concerning the resistance he expected to encounter. Not a foe had yet appeared, but he never permitted a person to pass him alive. No less than twenty-five persons whom he met in the highway after getting into Kansas had been shot, and yet he avoided the public roads as much as possible.

Early in the morning of August 21 Quantrell and his band came in sight of the fated town. The sun was just straggling above the undulations of the prairie and the people of the place were beginning to resume the duties of a newly-born day.

With a cry which froze the blood of everyone in the town who heard it, Quantrell and his two hundred followers descended upon the place with pistol, sword and firebrand. Their work of devastation soon completed, they moved on other scenes of war and bloodshed.

Quantrell was the most heartless of all. What cared he for the glory won to his name by the sacking of the unprotected and defenseless city? It would bring him not fame, but infamy. And, in-

deed, because of that inhuman act he has ever since been known as "Butcher Quantrell."

Disgusted with the extent of their own hellish propensities, Quantrell and his band of murderers hastily retraced their steps, but they were terribly harassed during the entire return march by the Kansas militia and federal troops that hurriedly concentrated and went in pursuit of them.

Just how many men engaged in this pursuit of the retreating guerrillas is not definitely known, but the force has been reliably estimated at fully seven thousand, and nothing but hard marching, determined fighting and an endurance that has never been equaled saved the guerrillas from total destruction. At Black Jack, about fifteen miles from Lawrence, a stand was made, and some brisk fighting occurred. The guerrillas took to cover in a large barn which stood at the edge of an orchard.

Several assaults were made to dislodge them, but in vain. The horses of the guerrillas were suffering severely, however, and realizing that without horses they would be unable to get out of Kansas, the guerrillas made a desperate charge, in which thirty-two of the militia were killed, and a panic was the result. But the guerrillas did not care to follow up the victory, as every moment was precious. The militia were swarming and closing in upon them rapidly, and it was only by the rarest stroke of fortune that Quantrell and his men ever escaped from Kansas. When once more safely across the border

on their old stamping ground in Missouri, the guerrillas disbanded and once more mingled among their friends and sympathizers in Jackson and Clay counties. When the Civil War had ended, and the restoration of peace had forced the guerrillas out of existence, the monotony of a peaceful life began to pall on the James boys, and they quite naturally took up the wild existence which subsequently made them the most feared desperadoes of America.

trashy novels they could get their hands on, and gloried in the old stories of lawlessness and vandalism. Their ideal was the road agent or highwayman, and it is little wonder they grew up to follow the course of crime they adopted. Many acts of vandalism are attributed to them, and the poisoning of neighbors' live stock, the mutilation of their crops and live stock and other misdemeanors of similar character were charged against them in many instances. They were arrested several times in their boyhood days, but on account of their youth and promises to do better in future they were released. They had not the slightest regard for their word, and as soon as released went right back to their waywardness. They were young men when the war broke out, and just as naturally as ducks take to water did they fall in with the guerrillas, which were on land just about what the pirates were on the high seas. While ostensibly an arm of the Confederate Army, they were a lot of freebooters and cut-throats, who respected the property of no one and used the gray uniform as a cloak to mask their villainy and crime.

In their youthful days they associated much with the Younger brothers, with whom they quite naturally formed an alliance later, making up a quartette of the worse desperadoes the country ever knew.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE JAMES BOYS AS BANK ROBBERS.

THEY FREQUENTLY VARIED THE MONOTONY OF LOOTING TRAINS IN ORDER TO CRACK A RICH BANK NOW AND THEN.

Life at best is monotonous and causes desperadoes engaged in lawlessness to seek other pastimes where gold is in sight. Bank robbing offers an most alluring diversion, for which reason, perhaps, the James Boys frequently flitted from the prairie to the cities and small towns, where they put in their time robbing a few banks. This they did to recuperate their frenzied finances and to keep them in practice, perhaps. The notion of these bank robberies took them all of a sudden as a rule, and they were usually committed on the spur of the moment, little preparation being made for the raid and but small planning having been done in advance.

One of their most successful robberies was that of the Bank of Gallatin, Mo., in 1869. It was a dark and gloomy day in December, when the bank was flush with funds, the farmers having nearly all deposited the proceeds of their big grain crops and having

drawn little or no money out for spring planting and other expenses. Without a moment's warning a gang of mounted men rode wildly down the main street of the little town, firing revolvers and driving everybody into the houses on pain of instant death. Several men who dared their fire dropped dead in the street and others staggered to places of safety badly wounded. Stopping in front of the bank, the marauders dismounted and, with their revolvers in their hands, dashed inside, leaving two heavily-armed members of the gang to mind the horses. The cashier was held up at the point of a revolver, and when he made a move to slam the vault doors, but was shot dead in his tracks. The paying teller was wounded and the other clerks and attaches driven into a room and held prisoners while the others looted the bank. They secured only about \$7,000, owing to their hurry and the fact that they overlooked several hundred thousand-dollar bills, which were in a secret compartment of the vault, which they did not know of. Cursing their luck at getting so little, they fled outside, and, mounting their horses, rode away, still firing at everyone they saw out of sheer malice.

Before they left they openly announced themselves as the James robbers and threatened to return some other time, when the bank was more well burdened with cash, and clean it out again.

Perhaps more by reason of the cold murders and audacity of the affair than the rather small proceeds of the robbery the people demanded that the James

Boys and their gang of villains be rounded up, and while the Governor was at first tardy to act, public opinion at last became so strong that orders were at last issued that they must be run down.

Amongst those who believed most thoroughly in the guilt of the James brothers was Capt. John Thomason, of Clay county, Missouri. He thought that it was no use in the world to deal in half measures with these miscreants. He was persuaded that there would be no peace, no security for life or property, as long as they were at large, hence he put himself at the head of a band of men who were resolved at all hazards and at any cost to arrest Frank and Jesse James and bring them to justice. Captain Thomason had served during the war on the Confederate side; he had also sustained the office of Sheriff of Clay county to the great admiration of the county at large. He carried with him great moral influence as a man who was the outspoken friend of law and order. No man in Clay county could command a larger following for any good purpose. The James brothers were made acquainted with the purpose of Captain Thomason; they knew the man they had to deal with, but they were not in the least dismayed. They went out to meet him and his band. The meeting is said to have taken place near the home of the Samuels. Captain Thomason demanded their immediate unconditional surrender. Of course, as may be well supposed, they laughed the demand to scorn, and seemed disposed to treat the whole affair as a huge farce. When the thing as-

sumed a more serious aspect and Captain Thomason hinted at force, then there was nothing for it but to meet fire with fire. And the guerrilla boys proved themselves ready for the encounter. A shot from Jesse's pistol brought down Captain Thomason's horse dead under him. The fray lasted only a few minutes. The pursuing party felt that to proceed would only be to endanger life, with little prospect of capturing their prey, so they returned, and Frank and Jesse rode back home scathless and triumphant.

A whole year or more had passed since the last bank raid, and the public mind began to rest in a sense of security. Besides which, the managers of banks, as may well be expected, looked more diligently to the means and methods of security and defense. But while there is no insurmountable difficulty in guarding against ordinary dangers, the special and unexpected and sudden dangers are not so easily foreseen.

Columbia is a pleasant little village in the County of Adair, in Kentucky. A quiet, sleepy little place that knew nothing to disturb the even tenor of its way, save when the holding of the Courts of Session stirred the dull monotony of the place.

On the afternoon of April 29th, 1872, all was in statu quo. It was about 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The bank was still open. The president of the Bank of Deposit was chatting with Mr. R. A. C. Martin, the respected cashier of the bank, and Mr. Garnett, an old citizen of Columbia. All in a moment the conversation was interrupted by a most unusual occur-



rence. Five well-armed horsemen dashed into the street. Promiscuous firing of pistols, oaths and threatenings; every human being was driven into the house on peril of instant death. Those who lingered got a bullet dangerously near their heads, which put them into instant movement for safety. The cashier of the bank, who had just closed and locked the safe, was ordered to open it, and did so, with a revolver pushed alongside his head, accompanied by the threat of having his brains blown out if he didn't. The bank president came out of his office with a revolver in his hand, and was shot through the head the next instant. Gathering what money they could get their hands on, the robbers put it into bags, and, after a few parting shots, fled. This time they secured even less than on the occasion of the former robbery, for they had neglected to inform themselves that that very day the bank had met some heavy obligations and had little funds on hand. As before, the fact of their small booty seemed to enrage the robbers, and they shot at everybody they saw. After they had left town, the usual indignation meeting was held and the authorities aroused to action, but none seemed particularly desirous to pursuing the gang, and, after a lot of bluff and bluster, the matter was again dropped.

The third robbery of the series occurred some time later at Corydon, Iowa, which was about the same as the other two which preceded it. It was on the 28th of June, 1873, at about 10 o'clock in the morning. The bank was just opening for business, when seven des-

peradoes charged furiously into the center of the town, firing right and left and swearing to shoot dead everybody who remained in the streets. Their commands were obeyed. The streets were cleared. None of the inhabitants thought of offering any resistance. Three of the robbers dismounted and, with cocked pistols, entered the bank, swearing to blow the heads off any who dared to interfere with them. The six heavy dragoon pistols served to terrify those who were in the bank, and they yielded at discretion. The safe was opened and the contents thrown into a sack. It is said that the robbers made by this one haul a sum nearly approaching \$40,000. The people in the bank were charged to order and silence, and one of the robbers' brood boasted that he could fetch a button off the coat of any of them with his pistol; so they had best have a care.

Of course, after the consternation had given place to quieter moments, the inhabitants instituted a vigorous pursuit. The common result followed. Not one of the robbers were caught.

## CHAPTER IV.

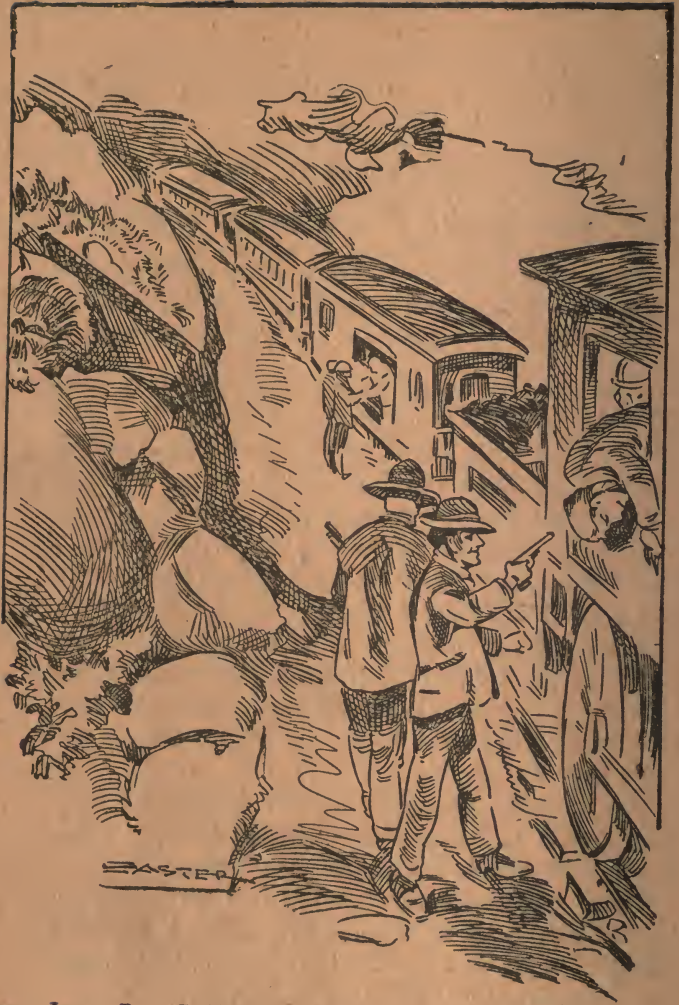
## THE JAMES BOYS' FIRST TRAIN ROBBERY.

AFTER BANK ROBBING BECAME MONOTONOUS—THEY TACKLED HOLDING UP EXPRESS TRAINS, AND WERE SO SUCCESSFUL THEY KEPT AT IT FOR SEVERAL YEARS.

Ever since the world began man has grown tired of the same old thing over and over. It would hardly be credited that such an exciting, perilous vocation as bank robbing could become monotonous, but if the James boys and their close associates, the Younger brothers, are to be believed, even bank robbing palls on one's nerves after awhile and something more exciting must be hunted up. Naturally, train robbery offered the greatest allurements in the excitement line, and therefore it was to it that this quartette of bad men turned after they had decided to shelve bank robbery for awhile and try a new line of thieving.

The idea of a change to a more daring and reckless species of robbery is supposed to have originated with Frank James and Jim Younger.

These two desperate bandits had been absent from the band for several months, and it is probable that they were on a tour of observation. They made a trip westward by rail as far as Cheyenne, and evi-



32 James Boys Robbing the Missouri Pacific Express.

dently learned a great deal regarding the running of trains, shipment of money by express from the Pacific Coast and other important information necessary to be possessed in the successfully carrying on of their new business enterprise of wrecking and robbing railroad trains.

The result of their confab was a determination to inaugurate a new order of "knights of the road." The "road agents" of the Far West were to be completely thrown into the shade. Holding up and robbing mere stage coaches on lonely roads in England had made the names of Claud Duval and Dick Turpin world renowned. What would the world say of this daring scheme to tackle the great railway trains, the giant stage coaches of this latter part of the nineteenth century?

This thought fired the vaulting ambition of the James boys to the intensest degree, and the terrible crime it involved of the indiscriminate slaughter of helpless women and children did not cause them a moment's hesitation.

It was on the night of July 21st, 1873, in pursuance with the plan agreed upon at their meeting in their Jackson county cave, the gang of eight bandits met at a point near Council Bluffs, Iowa, where they were to hold up their first train. At this point there is a sharp curve in the road, which is also in a deep cut, and it was decided that these existing conditions would greatly add to the success of the

plot and render the train crew and passengers more easy victims than if it took place elsewhere.

Their conjectures in this line proved right, for the train fell an easy victim to their wiles and the desperate attack that followed the stopping of the train.

The train consisted of seven coaches, including two sleepers, and was in charge of Engineer Martin Kelly, who was looking sharply along the glistening rails, when he saw the ties piled across the track. He instantly threw the reversing lever, applied the air brakes, but too late. The robbers had also loosened a rail.

The engineer saw the movement and uttered a cry of despair.

The screaming engine struck the loosened rail and plunged sideways into the bank, while the cars telescoped and piled up in terrible confusion. Engineer Rafferty was instantly killed and a dozen passengers seriously injured. Regardless of all this, however, the robbers quickly boarded the wreck, two of them entering the express car, while the others forced the excited and demoralized passengers to deliver up all their money and valuables.

The express messenger was made to open the safe and give the bandits what money he had in charge, but the amount was small, consisting of about three thousand dollars. From the passengers nearly as much more was obtained. This was a bitter disappointment to the outlaws, for they confidently ex-

pected to find not less than fifty thousand dollars in gold, as reported. Fortunately, the bandits were twelve hours too soon, as on the following day the express carried over the same road seventy-five thousand dollars in gold.

After securing all the booty possible, the seven daring wreckers waved their hats and shouted farewell to their victims, and, gaining their horses, they rode away to the south.

The excitement created over this dreadful outrage was very great, and hundreds volunteered to assist in apprehending the desperadoes.

The trail led straight through Missouri and to the Missouri River, where there was unmistakable evidence that the outlaws swam the stream with their horses. Following the track on the other side, the band was followed into Jackson county, where, as usual, every trace disappeared. A party of detectives went down to Monegaw Springs in search of the outlaws, and found Jesse James and two of the Younger boys, but they made no effort to bring them away, and were glad to escape themselves alive.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE FAMOUS LIBERTY BANK ROBBERY.

ONE OF THE MOST DARING AND SENSATIONAL OF ALL THE JAMES BOYS' LONG LIST OF BANK ROBBERIES—HOW THEY LANDED \$20,000 IN A VERY SHORT TIME.

It was ever the game of the James boys to make their operations a complete surprise. They found by experience that when they could surprise a town or a bank absolutely they had things pretty much all their own way. The very suddenness of the attack seemed to daze the victims, and they did not even think of resistance, in most instances.

The war had made the guerrillas expert in massacring repugnant citizens, and in appropriating the property of their victims. Many of the old crowd were banded together by the sinews of the "black oath," and scarcely had the smoke of battle been lifted up and assimilated with the refreshing dew clouds of heaven before plans were matured for the robbing of country banks.

On the 20th of January, 1866, the sheriff of Harrison county attempted to execute a capias for the arrest of Bill Reynolds, in Pleasant Hill, who was under indictment for crimes committed during the war. Geo. Maddox and N. P. Hayes were in town at the



time, and as the three were members of the same organization, resistance to the officer was made. It became necessary for the sheriff to summon a posse of citizens to his assistance. A fight in the open street then ensued, ending in the death of Reynolds and Hayes and the capture of Maddox. Threats of an attack on the town by guerrillas were rumored, and for several days nearly every male citizen was bearing arms in anticipation of an attempt being made to liberate Maddox.

The excitement was unabated in Pleasant Hill until the 14th of February, when the robbery of the Clay County Savings Association at Liberty, Missouri, was reported. The reason why rumors were so persistently circulated of an intended attempt to deliver Maddox was now clearly understood to be for the purpose of making the surprise on Liberty more complete. Early in the morning of St. Valentine's Day a squad of the old guerrillas, numbering an even dozen, rode into Liberty from different directions and, meting in the public square, they disposed themselves as follows: Three of the robbers were stationed some distance from the bank at eligible positions, which would most readily detect any centralizing attack or suspicious movement of the citizens; the other nine rode directly up to the front of the bank, where two of the number dismounted and entered with drawn revolvers. The hour being early, luckily for the bandits there was no one in the bank except the cashier, Mr. Bird, and his son.

A pistol was presented at the head of each, and under threats of instant death, in case of refusal, Mr. Bird opened the bank vault, from which the sum of seventy-two thousand dollars was taken and crammed into a pair of saddle bags carried for the purpose. As the robbers were regaining their horses for flight, Mr. Bird thrust his head out of a window and called to a little boy by the name of Wymore, whom he saw passing, telling him that a robbery had been committed and to raise the alarm. As the little fellow, not more than twelve years of age, raised the cry of "Robbers! Help!" he was fired on by the bandits, and fell dead with five fatal bullets in his body. The robbers then began firing indiscriminately and yelling with savage fury, so that for some time after the bandits had departed the citizens were too badly intimidated to think of pursuit. A posse, under the leadership of the sheriff, was organized about one hour afterward, however, and started out on a spirited chase. The trail led to Mount Gilead Church, where the evidence of bank paper showed that the robbers had tarried a few moments to divide the spoils. It was also evident that the band had separated and taken various directions so as to elude pursuit, which they accomplished so effectively that not one of the bandits was apprehended.

## CHAPTER VI.

## ROBBING THE OVERLAND STAGE COACHES

THOSE VERSATILE BANDITS AND THEIR EXPLOITS AS ROAD AGENTS IN SEVERAL SENSATIONAL HOLD-UPS OF THE OLD-TIME STAGE COACHES.

Although they favored train robberies as being more prolific of profit, the James boys did not hesitate now and then to engage in a little road agent business on the side, when things were dull and opportunities were good, and they made a number of pretty big hauls in that manner. The hold-ups were all tragic and sensational, and in several of them rather sharp battle preceded the robberies. One of the first stage robberies perpetrated was that of the regular coach which ran between Malvern and Hot Springs. These coaches were more in the nature of ambulances for the sick who went to Hot Springs for treatment, but as these patients were of the rich rather than the poor, the James boys decided to take a chance, and, as they expected, the chance panned out well. At a little place called Sulphur Vale the stage halted for change of horses, and it was there the bandits decided to attack it. It had proceeded about a mile from the relay station when the driver of the coach was suddenly accosted:



"Stop! stop! or I'll blow your head off!"

With this unceremonious challenge five men, dressed in Federal uniform, sprang from their ambush, each with cocked revolvers in their hands, threatening the lives of every passenger who dared to resist them. Of course, the passengers were struck dumb with consternation and terror. Presence of mind is an uncommonly good thing, but by no means common under such circumstances.

"Come, d—n you! Tumble out quick; we have no time to spare!" was the order of the foremost robber.

"Oh, certainly!" said a Mr. Charles Morse. "We can do nothing else."

"I am paralyzed in my legs and cannot walk," cried a poor old victim of rheumatism within the stage, as the other passengers came tumbling out.

"Never mind! Stay where you are," was the reply.

The stage was emptied, save of the one lame old gentleman. The rest of the passengers were ordered, with oaths and threats, and with pointed revolvers to confirm the threats, to form in a circle and hold up their hands, which they did without delay.

The brigands then began to search, examine and rob every passenger. Not one escaped, and not one seemed equal to offering the least resistance or making the slightest remonstrance. The net result in money and valuables approximated the sum of \$4,000.

The next stage robbery was that of the Concord stage. It came rumbling along with eight pas-

sengers, seven men and a woman. The coach had scarcely entered the shadow of a deep woods, when the driver noted two horsemen some distance ahead in the woods. Suspecting nothing, he drove on until he came up with them, when he wheeled suddenly across the road, and, pointing rifles at his head, ordered him to halt. There was nothing to do but obey and he did so with alacrity. He saw at once he had stage robbers to deal with and accepted his fate. He recognized them as the James Boys and begged his passengers if they valued their lives to offer no resistance.

"You see, they'll have your money, anyhow, and if you bother 'em they'll have your life as well as your money."

"Come out the stage, please," said the rider who had first commanded the halt.

The order took the shape of the most polite request. The passengers looked through the open windows and saw the muzzles of two pair of revolvers, commanding the whole line of the stage. The passengers needed no further argument. Mr. R. S. Rountree, of the Milwaukee *Evening Wisconsin*, was wide awake to the importance of the hour, and managed to slip his gold watch and pocketbook under the cushion as he rose to leave the stage. Miss Rountree, daughter of the Hon. R. Rountree, of Lebanon, Ky., the only lady on board, was permitted to retain her seat. After the passengers were out and stood in single file, Frank James tossed his rein to his companion, who covered

the whole line with his pistols, and then proceeded to search their pockets, while they were charged to hold up their hands and keep them up. There seems not to have been the first thought of resistance.

When they were through with their examination and robbery, they generously returned the railway passes and tickets that were no manner of use in the world to them. Then, with the utmost nonchalance, they proceeded to explain that they were not robbers! Oh! dear, no, nothing so vulgar! They were only moonshiners who, unduly pressed by an unreasonable government, were compelled to leave the country, and, of course, they could not go without money. And, therefore, though much against their principles, they were compelled to levy toll after this fashion. They were extremely sorry if they had given any undue annoyance. It might be some consolation to know that they had taken toll from the outgoing coach that very afternoon, and Mr. George Grogham, one of the owners of the celebrated cave, had contributed the handsome sum of \$700.

Turning to Mr. Craig, of Georgia, Frank said he hated worse than anything to take his money, for in the late war he had fought in a Georgia regiment himself, but then he had no option.

"You know, my dear sir," said Frank, with a smile, "needs must when the devil drives."

Turning to the only lady of the party, the impertinent robber inquired her name.

"Miss Rountree, of Lebanon," said the lady, scarcely able to hide her disgust.

"Indeed!" said Frank, his face quite lighting up with a smile. "Why, then, you'll probably know some friends of mine. I have some very dear friends in Lebanon. Do you happen to know the Misses Smithers who live there?"

"Yes, sir, I do," replied Miss Rountree.

"Dear me," added Frank, "what a coincidence! Nice."

After sarcastically bidding the party good bye, and asking Miss Rountree to remember him to the Smithers girls of Lebanon, when she saw them again, the robbers rode off, headed by Frank James, while the coach and its terror-stricken passengers got under way once more and proceeded on its trip.



## CHAPTER VII.

## ROBBING THE RUSSELLVILLE BANK.

ANOTHER DARING ACHIEVEMENT OF THE JAMES BOYS BY WHICH THEY SECURED NEARLY \$75,000, WHICH, AS USUAL, THEY SOON SQUANDERED.

The robbery of the Russellville (Mo.) National Bank was another of those daring deeds of lawlessness, which very daring proved beyond doubt it was the work of the James gang and left its "earmarks," the indisputable evidence of their clever work. Whenever those desperadoes planned they planned well and whatever they attempted they came pretty near making a success. This was particularly true of their bank exploits. They never failed to land the treasure in a single instance.

Russellville is a pleasant little town of about five thousand inhabitants, saving and thrifty, and highly proud of their bank and its contents—that is, they were proud of its contents prior to the James boys' visit. There wasn't much contents to be proud of after they went away. It was in the center of a very thriving agricultural district, and its bank was well filled with farmers' money.

It was a beautiful spring morning in 1873. The stores were open and the store-dealers were begin-

ning their business for the day. Now and then a rumbling wagon, corn laden, creaked along the quiet street. The bank was just about to open its doors, when suddenly a clatter of hoofs was heard. Sharp, quick and terrible as the crash of doom, a dozen horsemen, each armed with two pairs of revolvers, dashed down the street, to the terror and amazement of the villagers. With the most fearful oaths and threatenings these armed brigands commanded the people to go into their houses and keep quiet on pain of instant death, and to confirm their purpose they fired in all directions. Two of the men—of whom Jesse James was one and Cole Younger the other—dismounted at the bank and entered. The cashier had opened the safe and the books were out on the counters, and a quantity of gold was spread out before the cashier, which he was then in the act of counting. The sudden entrance of these armed men astonished him for a moment. He turned at once to the safe and was in the act of swinging back the door, when Jesse James said:

“Leave that alone and keep quiet, or I’ll blow your brains out.”

What could the cashier do with such a threat in his ears, supported as it was by the loaded revolvers, too close to said brains to be pleasant? The cashier, setting a higher value on his life than all the gold in the safe, kept quiet, and the safe was rifled. The loose gold on the counter was swept off by Cole Younger. Everything of value was taken away except a few



Robbing the Russellville Bank.

revenue and postage stamps. These the robbers thought hardly worth the trouble of taking, and so Jesse, to whom a joke was never untimely, tossed back the stamps, remarking to the affrighted cashier that he "might want to mail letters later in the day!"

The booty secured, the robbers departed as they came, cursing and threatening instant death to any who dared to follow. No one blamed the cashier of the bank. He was thoroughly helpless.

As with their other robberies, the James Boys were so quick in this instance that the robbery was over and the robbers gone almost before anyone realized it had happened. It was the very boldness of it that carried it through successfully and the very audacity that appalled every one who was about when it occurred.

The usual appeal to the authorities was made, and the customary posse was organized to run down the robbers, but in a little while the sensation died out; the robbers were reported hundreds of miles away, and the matter came to an end.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## A \$50,000 EXPRESS CAR ROBBERY.

HOW THE JAMES BOYS CLEANED UP A WELLS-FARGO EXPRESS CAR AND GOT AWAY WITH A BIG SUM OF BANKNOTES AND BULLION.

Muncie, Kansas, is a little hamlet, about eight miles west of Kansas City, on the line of the Kansas Pacific Railroad. It is usually as tranquil and quiet as sleepy country stations are reputed to be, and seldom, if ever did anything occur, to awaken it out of its normal torpidity. For years it had slumbered by the side of the railroad tracks—just about on the map and that was all. But on December 12th, 1874, there came its awakening, and after a reign of the wildest excitement, it became known the country over, by reason of the sensational doings that took place there.

It was on the afternoon of the day above mentioned that five horsemen, heavily armed, rode into town, led by a man wearing a heavy black beard and carrying two heavy Colt revolvers. They were all masked with black dominoes, and as they entered the town limits attracted the attention of a few straggling villagers, who saw them riding slowly down the main street. In front of Purdee's store, on the main

street, they dismounted and went inside, leaving one of their number outside with the horses. Almost instantly they held up Purdee with their revolvers and robbed his till of the few dollars it contained.

Then they compelled the store-keeper to accompany them to the railroad water-tank near the station building and point out a quantity of old cross-ties. These they piled on the track, effectually blocking the line. They also set out the flag at the station as a signal for the next train to stop.

During this time a horseman, a wagonload of women and children, and several villagers happened along. These the robbers immediately herded together—altogether twenty-five persons—and put under guard of one of their number.

The 4.45 passenger express from the West was the next train due. As it neared the station the engineer, Robert Murphy, saw the signal and the pile of cross-ties on the track and pulled up his train within a hundred feet of the cross-ties.

The next minute he was gazing into the cold steel barrels of a quartette of revolvers, while his cringeing fireman was also in a similar predicament, both being threatened with instant death if they moved a muscle. Meanwhile others of the gang were at work in the passenger coaches robbing the affrighted passengers and trainmen. They next tackled the express car. In the meantime the robbers on the locomotive had forced the engineer to uncouple the express car and run it up the track several hundred yards, to where

the pile of cross-ties on the track prevented any further progress. The express messenger had not time to lock the doors of the car before he was covered by a couple of guns and forced, under pain of instant death, to open the safe.

He did so reluctantly, and almost in less time than it takes to tell it, the robbers had tumbled out some \$55,000 and stowed it away in a mail sack, the contents of which they dumped out for the purpose. The robbers left the car, carrying the treasure, after warning the express agent they would fill him full of lead if he even dared look out of the rifled car. At a signal from the leader, the gang collected around him; they held a momentary consultation, and then mounting their horses, rode back to where the white-faced passengers were peering out of the car windows and bade them, "Give our regards to the folks in Kansas City." Before riding away they returned several watches they had taken from women passengers, saying they might need them later on.

Wheeling their horses, the robbers dashed off at top speed, going in the direction of Kansas City and carrying with them nearly sixty thousand dollars in booty.

With the arrival of the train in Kansas City, posses were sent out in pursuit of the robbers. The chase was futile, for the gang had crossed the State line into Jackson County, Missouri where their trail was lost in the mountains.

The methods of the robbers and the descriptions

of the black-bearded leader convinced the authorities that the gang was headed by Jesse James, who, although scarcely thirty years old, was already known as a desperado, with a score of robberies and murders in Missouri to his credit. Associated with him were his brother Frank, three years older than he; Bill McDaniells, Clell Miller, Arthur McCoy, and several others.

The only one of the gang captured was Bill McDaniells, who was arrested while on a spree with some of the jewelry taken from the Muncie train in his possession. Two months later McDaniells escaped, but was discovered and shot by an officer who attempted to capture him.



## CHAPTER IX.

## A COUPLE OF DARING BANK ROBBERIES.

JESSE JAMES AND THE YOUNGER BROTHERS PLAY A FOUR-HANDED GAME AT BANK-ROBBERY AND CLEAN UP TWO MONEY DEPOSITORIES FOR GOOD ROUND SUMS.

From the standpoint of a criminal critic, the James Boys and Younger Brothers did their best work in the line of bank robbing, when they undertook a job together. They were adepts at planning such events and went into such details that they seldom failed to make a complete coup when they started in to get away with the treasure. The rapidity with which they worked precluded all possibility of the assembling of a posse and subsequent capture or death. As a usual thing the bank was robbed and the robbers and booty gone before the people of the village fully realized what was happening. From this it must not be inferred that they always chose night for their operations, as they more often worked in mid-day, for the reason that at that hour the vaults were unlocked and open and the money easier to get at. For instance, the robbery of the Bank of Lexington, Mo., occurred at high noon, October 30, 1866. At that hour, four determined men rode down the main street and leisurely hitched their horses in an alley near the banking house of Alexander Mitch-

ell & Co. Two of the men walked into the bank, meeting the cashier, Mr. J. L. Thomas, in the doorway, who went behind the counter to attend the wants of the strangers. One of the men handed a \$50 7-30 bond to the cashier with the request to have it changed. As Mr. Thomas opened the cash drawer two more of the robbers appeared at the door with drawn revolvers, the fifth man being left in charge of the horses. It was quick work now, for, looking into the muzzles of four deadly pistols, the cashier was compelled to hand over all the money in the bank, \$2,000, which being placed in a sack, the robbers coolly walked out of the bank with a parting admonition to Mr. Thomas that if he raised any outcry they would kill him. Mounting their horses, the robbers rode swiftly away, and it was more than an hour after the robbery before the pursuing party was organized. Twelve well-armed citizens started after the bandits, and spent two days in a fruitless search for the despoilers. People began to consider the insecurity of country banks and the means of apprehending the daring outlaws; meetings were held and various plans discussed, but in two weeks' time the outrage was almost forgotten.

For six long months nothing startling was heard from the James and Younger brothers, and they were supposed to be far away from their old stamping ground. But, like the proverbial bad penny, they always turned up unexpected.

Savannah is the capital seat of Andrew county, a

thrifty little village of twelve or fifteen hundred inhabitants, that has suffered but little from the blight of war. The place contained a small banking institution, under the proprietorship of Judge McLain, with small capital.

On the 2d of March, 1867, five ex-guerrillas, J. F. Edmunson, Jim White, Bill Chiles, Bud McDaniels, and a fellow named Pope, rode into Savannah in such a manner as indicated they were on important business. It was nearly high noon, and no one was in the bank except the Judge and his son. The bandits rode up and four of them dismounted, leaving their horses in charge of the fifth man. As the four entered the bank with drawn pistols, the Judge looked earnestly over his spectacles, and at once comprehended the character of his customers. He slammed the door of the safe shut, and, seizing a revolver which lay on the bank counter, he met the bandits halfway, but the shots proved ineffectual, while a big navy pistol ball went tearing through his breast, which made him sink to the floor as one death-stricken. Young McLain ran into the street and gave the alarm, which brought many citizens to the rescue. The robber left in charge of the horses shouted for the return of his companions, who, finding their position becoming very serious, mounted the ready horses and fled.

A posse of twenty-five citizens went in pursuit of the bandits a few minutes after their hasty departure and trailed them for a few miles, after which they

lost all trace of them and the chase was abandoned, Judge McLain's wound was desperate, but he eventually recovered.

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The next robbery and raid occurred a few months later at Richmond, Mo., where the James and Younger boys, with a gang of ten other desperadoes, terrorized and looted the town, robbing the private bank of Hughes & Mason of some \$5,000.

The robbers next began an attack upon the jail, which at that time held a number of prisoners whose arrest, it was claimed, was due to the expression of secession sentiment. The jailer, B. G. Griffin, and his son, fifteen years of age, were at the jail, and they received their assailants with remarkable bravery. The boy stationed himself behind a tree, and was emptying a revolver in the face of the outlaws when he was surrounded and shot to death. Mr. Griffin, seeing the fate of his brave boy, rushed up, and, standing over the lifeless body, fought like the frenzied man he was until, pierced by seven bullets, he fell dead across the bleeding and lifeless body of his son. By this time the citizens recovered their lost nerves, and from a score of windows there poured the rifle and pistol flame, yet throughout the combat not a single robber was harmed.

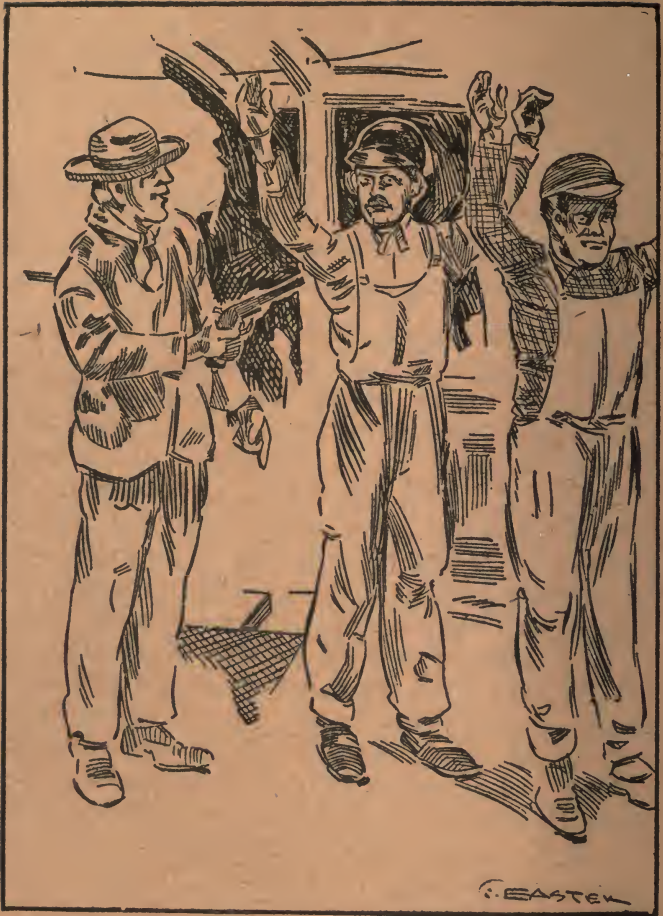
## CHAPTER X.

## ROBBING THE "DAVENPORT LIMITED."

HOW THE JAMES BOYS' GANG HELD UP A WELL-FILLED TRAIN AND MURDERED AND ROBBED THE PASSENGERS.

One of the most notorious—as well as brutal robberies committed by the James Boys gang was that of the Davenport Limited, from Kansas City for Davenport, Iowa, on the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad. July 15th, 1881, it left Kansas City at 6.30 P. M., and was due at Davenport the following morning, running over the southwestern division of the road. The make-up of the train was a combination baggage and express car, a smoker, two day coaches and a sleeper. There was a fair number of passengers on board and everything was going along nicely, when the train stopped at Cameron, a small station, some sixty-four miles from the starting point, where several rough looking men got aboard and seated themselves in the smoker. Although the lights were dim, there was sufficient light to see these men—four in number—were deeply engrossed in discussing some plans of a scheme they had on hand.

Finally the train rolled into Winston. The stop



was a short one, but during the few seconds that the cars lay beside the platform several things happened. One of the four men in the smoker carelessly placed his white handkerchief against the window-pane, and held it there for a moment. Outside it was very dark and quiet, only the monotonous chugging of the engine disturbing the silence.

Waiting until the trainmen were on board again, two men slipped across the platform and mounted the front end of the baggage car next to the tender. Several other dark figures flitted toward the train, and two more men swung on the platform between the baggage car and the smoker.

Then, without the slightest warning, the tragedy began.

As the two men climbed to the platform between the smoker and the baggage car the conductor swung his lantern from the front platform of the smoker as a signal for the engineer to go ahead. Turning, he entered the car, the two men behind him following with a rush. At the same instant the four men inside the smoker sprang forward with drawn revolvers.

There was a yell of "Throw up your hands!" and a revolver exploded, the flame shooting toward the ceiling of the car.

The conductor dropped his lantern and made a movement of resistance. The next instant a pistol shot rang out, and he fell dead on the platform.

The other men stood near the doorway, close beside the tall brigand, who was now recognized as Jesse James, holding their revolvers so as to cover the passengers in the seats. Just then the sleeping car conductor entered the car from the other end and was promptly shot the whole length of the car.

In the smoker the rapid discharge of revolvers formed a dense, white smoke in the forward end of the car. The passengers, seeing an opportunity to flee, were the more desirous to escape, as one of the desperadoes now proposed to "go through the gang."

Several men sprang up, among them a Mason named John McCullough, who had a heavy stone trowel in his hand. As he jumped into the aisle, still clinging to his trowel, he unconsciously swung it near the head of one of the outlaws. The brigand immediately shot McCullough through the head. Fatally wounded though he was, the stone mason managed to stagger to the rear door, where he fell off the platform and, like Conductor Westphal, was afterward found dead in the ditch.

This third murder completed the panic of the passengers. Yelling with fear, and pursued by the jeers of the murderers, they fled to the rear of the train, fighting with each other to get ahead. When the car was empty the two young girls, who had shown the greatest courage throughout the whole scene, left their seats and followed the others.

The utmost confusion now reigned in the train.

On the rear platform of the first day-coach, when



the mob of passengers came tearing through the train, was C. F. Chase, of the Topeka Police Department. With him was Harry Thomas, the rear brakeman. After the crowd had passed him, Chase looked forward through the cars. Three or four terrified passengers were crawling under the seats of the day-coach. Chase drew his hair-trigger revolver.

"For God's sake, put that up!" Thomas cried. "They've got the train. We've got to stop the engineer."

Chase still stood with his pistol in his hand, watching the men in the smoker, and Thomas swung out from the platform, waving his lantern frantically to the engineer, knowing that every rod they went from the station meant a rod farther from help.

The train continued to run on. Either the engineer did not see the signal or there was trouble on the locomotive.

"I'm going to stop him!" Thomas cried. He sprang into the car and pulled down the cord that controlled the automatic air-brakes, setting the brakes on every car on the train and stopping it with a jolt. He swung out again from the platform, shouting, "Robbers!"

But the desperadoes on the train knew their business. They were prepared for just such an emergency, and they acted promptly. As soon as the air-brakes stopped the train, the gang—in which there were at least twelve men—separated, some running

to the engine, the others making for the express car.

As the first two ruffians jumped into the cab, revolvers in hand, the fireman jumped from the other side. Running back to the rear platform of the smoker, he concealed himself in the darkness on the lower steps.

The engineer was trying to release the train from the grip of the automatic brakes. One of the boarding party clapped a revolver to the engineer's head.

"What in — are you stopping for? Pull ahead!" the man shouted.

"I can't," the engineer said. "Some one's put on the automatic."

A robber's pistol flashed in the darkness and a bullet whistled by his head. The next instant the engineer had tossed the cab lantern out of the window and was out on the running board of the engine, from which he reached the pilot and lay down across it, to be safe from the robber's fire. The James gang then began ransacking the train and went from car to car, shooting right and left those who offered the slightest resistance. The car floors were covered with blood, and the cars perforated with bullets. No less than nine men were killed, and their bodies lay in the car aisles. They robbed everybody, battering in the doors of the express and mail cars and robbing the safes of both. The express and mail clerks were among those killed for trying to protect their safes.

The James gang got over \$40,000 out of this robbery, which was divided among them, as was their usual custom, for despite their being such murderous robbers, they were fair to each other.

CHAPTER XI.

A BOLD DAYLIGHT ROBBERY.

HOW AN EXPRESS CAR WAS ROBBED OF \$70,000 IN BROAD DAYLIGHT BY THE JAMES BOYS AND THEIR GANG.

The task of holding up a long train and robbing the express car of over \$70,000, in broad daylight, is not an easy one that would be essayed by the average train robber, but that is just what the James gang did to the car containing that amount in Calumet and Heckla miners' pay envelopes.

This was back in 1880 and in the days when the name of the James boys was the synonym of deadly daring and expert highwaymanism. One of the robbers held up the engineer at the point of a rifle, another chased the fireman down the track, while the rest of the gang broke into the express car, killed the messenger and got the money.

The engineer and fireman were joking in the cab about the trip and the joy pay day always brought to the miners. The conductor paid no attention to the passengers except to collect their fares and chat a bit with a few whom he knew. It was 9.50 when the train wheezed up to a little shanty in the woods,

dignified with the name of Stanley. Several persons alighted and the conductor gave the signal to go ahead when the outbreak occurred.

With the suddenness of a lightning flash, a tall fellow with a black mask over the upper part of his face, arose from between the engine and tender with a big revolver in each hand and advised the engineer and fireman to throw up their hands quick. They instantly obeyed.

There was seventy thousand dollars aboard that train, and he was the engineer in charge, on whom its safety depended. But then there was that gun, on which his life depended, and it yawned in an ugly way. Discretion was much better than valor under such circumstances.

Back in the express car things were moving at a swift pace also. At the moment the shot was fired from the tender two more men, masked and enveloped in linen dusters, like the first, sprang up, also apparently from nowhere, and forced themselves into the car.

It was only the work of an instant for the robbers to enter the express car and cover the messenger with their pistols. Then they clearly and concisely stated that they were after about seventy thousand dollars of Calumet and Heckla money and proposed to have it even if they had to kill off all the express messengers in Christendom. The messenger did just as the others had done and threw up his hands. When directed to open the safe and pass out the two big

sacks containing the money, he did so without a word.

No sooner was the swag in a bag than the big fellow fired a single shot. It was not for the messenger, however, but a signal to let their pals know they had the money and were ready to escape. An answering shot came from the front of the train. With that the men jumped off the train and made for the woods, but not before bidding the engineer to "keep her going for a hundred miles or so."

There was a great hurrah when the train reached Heckla and the news of the robbery spread. A whole army of detectives were put to work on the case, and many of them followed false trails, but the Pinkerton men, who were also at work, sized it up right away as another of the James Boys' jobs.

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tainment was the races. Ethan Allen was to trot against a running mate at five o'clock. The people were crowding into the fair grounds between four and five in masses. The ticket sellers and the gate-men were doing a roaring trade. Mr. Hall, the secretary and treasurer of the association, had counted up the receipts of the day and found the same reached nearly \$10,000 in hard cash. Arrangements had been made to bank this money at the First National Bank, though it was considerably after banking hours.

Mr. Hall called one of his trusty assistants and gave him a tin box containing the money, and sent him to deposit it in the bank according to arrangement. The idea of this box being stolen in a street crowded with tens of thousands of people was never dreamed of. It would have been regarded as quite preposterous to think anyone would have the daring to attempt so wild an exploit. The young man who had charge of this box started off, carrying the treasure in his right hand.

Just at this moment the general attention of the crowd was attracted by the clatter of hoofs. Seven heavily armed horsemen rode along, the leaders being recognized as Jesse and Frank James. Their dress and manner was such as to mislead many spectators into the belief that they were a part of the show contingent of the fair. They realized their mistake when the horsemen were seen to surround the man with the money box, and as one of them felled him with a blow from the butt of a big re-



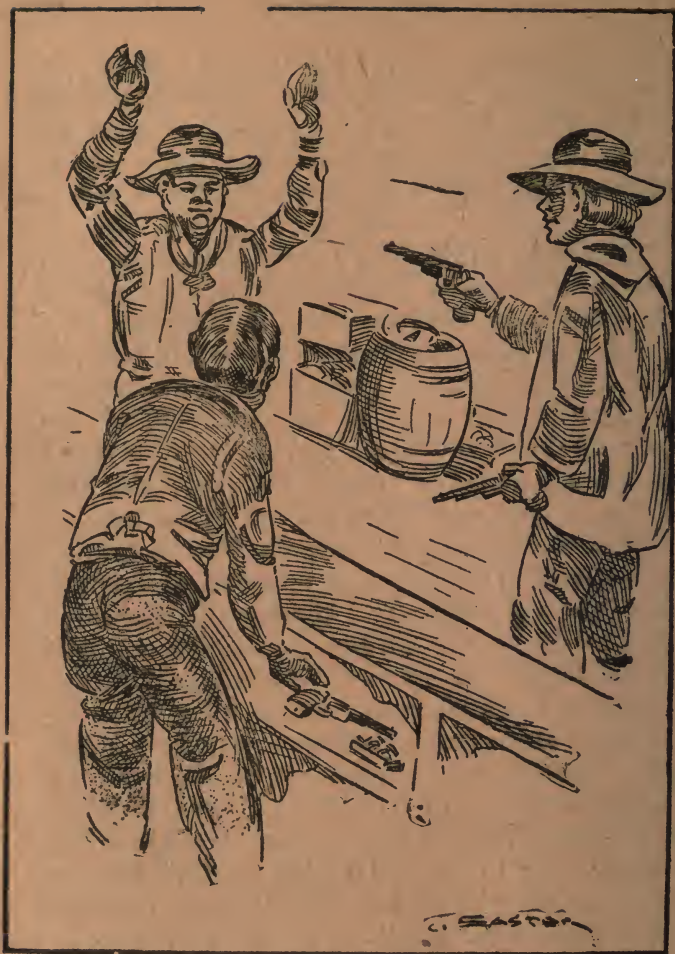
revolver, the others grabbed the treasure and all rode away like the wind. So quickly was it accomplished that although there were thousands of people all about, they were all too surprised to even start in pursuit of the robbers and they escaped with ease.

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The robbery of the Craig store at Bentonville, Ark., was another instance of sleek action on the part of the James gang. The firm did a large business on a strictly cash basis and therefore always had considerable money in the store. Mr. Craig and his son were alone in the store when the two James brothers entered as though to make a purchase. "What can I do for you, gentlemen?" asked the elder Craig affably, as he approached from the rear of the store.

"You can keep quiet," was the blunt answer of the foremost of the men as he presented a revolver in each hand and continued: "If either of you speak a word or stir an inch, I'll blow your brains out, so if you value your d——d lives, why be quiet!"

Looking round the Craigs saw two other men keeping guard at the door. Resistance was utterly impossible. The safe door was open; it was the work of a moment to rifle it of its contents. But the robbers were disappointed. They expected to make a big haul, but the Craigs had banked all their cash on hand at four o'clock, and the safe only contained about \$150. This greatly disgusted the rogues, so they swept up about \$200 worth of valuable silks and went as quickly as they came, leaving strict charge



that if they attempted to raise an alarm before they had time to leave the town, they would shoot them dead at sight.

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Another bank robbery of note, which was successfully accomplished by the James boys, was that of the Savings Bank of St. Genevieve, an old Catholic town of Missouri. The town is more than a century old—the home of the French aristocracy. The residents were among the most thrifty of the State, and nearly all of their money went into the bank, instead of being invested in the many wildcat schemes of the day. The vaults of the old bank often contained as much as \$100,000 at a time, and it was regarded as one of the most prosperous financial institutions of Missouri. Its fame reached the ears of the James Boys and quite naturally its looting followed.

It was a beautiful spring morning, the 27th of May, 1873. St. Genevieve was looking its very loveliest. Mr. O. D. Harris, the cashier of the bank, accompanied by F. A. Rozier, a son of the Hon. Forman A. Rozier, the president of the bank, had left his garden home all bright and cheerful, little dreaming what an episode was at hand. The cashier and his young companion arrived at the bank, the door swung open, and suddenly Mr. Harris and young Rozier were confronted by four armed men and accosted thus:

“We have come to help you to open the bank. Open the safe instantly, d——n you; we have no time to lose.”

"I am helpless and cannot resist you," replied the overpowered Mr. Harris.

Meantime another of the robbers pointed a pistol at the head of young Rozier, and called out:

"You keep still, d——d little rat, if you don't want to have your brains blown out in an instant!"

"I? What for?" asked the young clerk, who had shown signs of desiring to create an alarm.

"Not another word, young devil," said his stern-faced foe; "that's enough! A blabbing tongue can be stopped d——d easy."

Taking advantage of the moment, and desiring that these strange visitors should have all his room and none of his company, he made a bold leap and sprang down the steps of the bank into the street. As he fled the fellow fired at him and cried: "Halt! halt! you wretched young cuss!"

Several shots were fired after him, one grazing his shoulder, but he managed to dodge the bullets and got away, giving the alarm. Noting the townsmen were arming themselves, the robbers hastily completed their task of looting the bank of some \$70,000 and mounting their horses rode swiftly away.

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The next event on their criminal calendar was the robbery of a train in Nebraska. A regular meeting of the gang was held at which a number of projects were discussed.

Comanche Tony—a desperate Texas ranger—was added to the plundering brotherhood. The gang.

comprising the James boys, the Youngers, Bob Moore, and this Texas Tony, met—each, of course, coming different ways—at a point about fourteen miles east of the city of Council Bluffs, on the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway.

The train was due to pass their point of ambush about three o'clock in the morning. All night they waited and watched, scarcely exchanging a word with each other, and when they did, not above a whisper. Three or four rails were loosened and torn from their places. Several cross-ties were placed in position to be used the moment they were required. They worked and watched and waited in silence. They had chosen a most suitable spot. It was fourteen miles from Council Bluffs, six miles from Adair, and about the same distance from Des Moines. There was not a single human habitation for miles around.

The rumbling of the train was heard in the distance. The gang set to work with dogged determination, resorting to the old game of piling railroad ties on the track to derail the engine. It succeeded well. The train came bowling along at a good rate of speed, struck the ties and not only derailed the engine, but upset it as well, killing the brave engineer in the wreck. Then this band of desperadoes broke loose like the demons of hell, firing their pistols in the windows of the coaches at the panic stricken passengers. When they were sufficiently cowed, they were systematically robbed of everything of value they possessed.

The express car was broken into and the messenger in charge had his arm broken and was forced to unlock the safe. The robbers secured some \$6,000, and the poor guardian of the mails had his watch taken and ten dollars, the only money he possessed. After this every passenger was searched and robbed of money and jewelry. The spoils were put in a sack and the masked robbers sought their horses, and as the light broadened that peaceful summer morning they took their way southward, \$25,000 richer for their dreadful exploit.

A reward of \$50,000 was offered for their arrest. But it was offered in vain.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## ROBBERY OF THE CHICAGO AND ALTON EXPRESS.

THE JAMES BOYS' FAMOUS HOLD-UP NEAR GLENDALE, MISSOURI, AND WHAT CAME OF IT, WITH DESPERATE PURSUIT AND CAPTURE OF SOME OF THE GANG.

Early on the morning of September 7th, 1881, ten or a dozen roughly clad men drifted into a farm house a mile or so west of Glendale, Missouri, in the very heart of the hold-up district. They ranged in age from youth to half a century and looked like farmers from the adjacent wheat fields. That is their attire denoted peaceful farmers, but their heavy revolvers and repeating rifles did not. They were several hours assembling, and when the last men—v ho, by the way, were the James Boys, had arrived—a conference was held in a carefully guarded room.

As soon as the last arrival had taken his place at a large table, one of the company, a tall, determined-looking fellow with a sneering, treacherous face, formally addressed the meeting, tapping with the muzzle of his revolver upon a small railroad map spread out before him.

"There isn't any talk necessary, boys," he said.



70 Finding a Dead Outlaw After the Train Robbery.



"I sent for you to come ready to take the train, under my direction."

A chorus of voices announced the willingness of the men to follow their chief.

The tall man ran his eye over the crowd, and then looked at the map.

"It's dead easy," he said. "We're going to do it tonight, and we'll make a whole lot of money. The C. and A. passenger goes through this cut here between Glendale and Independence, about nine o'clock tonight. We'll do it there.

"She always carries a lot of United States Express money, and those big excursion parties are always going through besides—if we need them."

The men crowded around the chief as he proceeded with the details of the robbery, agreeing to all of his proposals. None of the band paid any attention to a dark-faced, middle-aged woman who brought some liquor to the table, and who listened eagerly to every word of the conversation, occasionally casting spiteful glances at the chief and at a short man whom the former addressed as "Dick Little," and who seemed to be second in command.

After their conference of half hour or so, the robbers disappeared, after agreeing to meet near the railroad tracks that night. Jesse James mounted his horse and rode away, his followers scattering in every direction, while a sinister-looking woman, who seemed in charge of the house, gathered up a few articles of clothing and left the house also.

At the cut selected by the chief of the gang, the Missouri Pacific crossed the line of the Chicago and Alton. It was considered a dangerous point for numerous reasons. Glendale, only three miles away, had been the scene of several railroad robberies within the past few years.

Aside from the bad reputation of the district, the crossing in the cut, with its steep sides and thickly wooded summits, was a constant menace to passing trains. Knowing this, it was the custom for engineers, especially on night trains, to slow up a little just before entering the ravine.

It was due to this fact, and to the quick eye of Engineer Foote, that the Chicago and Alton passenger train, west-bound to Kansas City, owed its escape from derailment on the night of September 7.

It was nearly nine o'clock when train Number Forty-Eight entered the east end of the cut. Luckily, it was a fairly clear night, for just before the locomotive reached the deepest part of the cut Engineer Foote saw a light—as of a small torch—flare up and wave across the track. He saw something else, too, that made him jam down his brakes with every ounce of pressure, not a moment too soon.

The gleam of the headlight showed Foote a pile of rocks heaped up five feet high between the rails and surmounted by a small stick with a red flag tied to the end flapping in the wind. The engine ran

right up to the obstruction, the pile thrusting itself in among the stones as the train stopped.

Just beyond the pile of rocks stood a tall masked man, holding a revolver in each hand. In the glare of the headlight, Engineer Foote "could see the whites of the fellow's eyes as he stared into the cab."

Foote knew then that the train was held up by road-agents, but there was no time for him to back away. The masked man waved his revolver toward the bank and shouted:

"Now, men, to your work! Fire away!"

A rolling discharge of firearms came in response to his order.

After thoroughly cowing the train crew and passengers, the robbers went through the train and "cleaned up" everybody. They even took the porter's tips and his dollar watch. "They went through the bunch with a fine-toothed comb," as a drummer, whose samples were even taken, expressed it.

As the looters went through the cars, each person was compelled under threat of death to empty the contents of his or her pockets into the huge sack, where everything—money, watches, and articles of jewelry—was jumbled together indiscriminately. Neither women or children were spared.

There were a number of emigrants aboard, who begged to be allowed to retain at least a small part of their money—all that they had in the world. They were left nothing of value.

Women were compelled to sit on the floor of the cars while the robbers stripped them of their jewelry. Valuables that had been hidden in the carseats and elsewhere were hunted up and tumbled into the sack. Every car was swept clean.

On the train was an excursion party of forty persons from Penn Yan, New York, going West in charge of the regular traveling agent of the Fort Scott road for the purpose of buying land. From this party alone the robbers took over six thousand dollars in money and valuables.

While this part of the robbery was in progress an emigrant from one of the forward cars came running after the robbers, half-crazed with grief and fear, crying to them to give him some of his money for his wife and children. As the man passed the platform from one car to another he was fired upon, but was dragged back uninjured by his friends.

Meanwhile the passengers in the Pullman cars in the rear of the train were trying to conceal their valuables with frantic haste. Several of the ladies in the car managed to secrete their valuables about their clothing, but even this would not have saved them from search, and the surrender of them, but for the fact of an unexpected interruption.

It occurred in this manner. The conductor had been rounded up with the rest of the crew, after he had been fired on twice.

While the robbers were going through the coaches it suddenly occurred to him that a freight train was

following his train West and must be about due at the cut, where the passenger train had now been lying about fifteen or twenty minutes.

Hazelbacher knew that Frank Burton, the rear brakeman, ought to be on the rear platform of the sleeper, and he shouted to him. Burton was at his station. He heard the call from the conductor, and knew what it meant. At the same time he heard the robbers entering the other end of the sleeper and heard them call out to the Pullman passengers that they were "coming in and going through the car."

In spite of the proximity of the bandits, and of the guard with rifles on top of the bank, Burton determined to risk getting back up the track to flag the freight train. Holding two Pullman lamps in front of him, he started back over the line.

At that moment he heard the train approaching, and he knew there was no time for explanations. He started off top speed.

Before he had gone a car length the men on the bluff opened up on him with their rifles. The bullets came pinging all around him, striking the rails and stones as he ran for his life, hugging the Pullman lamps in his arms. Twenty-five or thirty shots were fired at him, two of them going through his coat.

Then he heard Engineer Foote, of the passenger train, call out:

"For God's sake, don't shoot the boy; he's trying to save the lives of all these people!"

In the meantime the brakeman had managed to

signal the approaching freight train with his lanterns and it came to a stop within twenty feet of the rear Pullman. The robbers by this time realized that the freight crew would reinforce the men of the passenger train, hurriedly packed the last of their booty in small bags and made their escape over the hills as fast as their horses could carry them.

Great excitement followed this robbery, and the authorities made strenuous efforts to capture the gang. At first it was not suspected the James Boys had a hand in it, but later on certain circumstances cropped up, which put the blame fully on them.

The theory of the officers concerning the composition of the band was quickly confirmed, though in an unexpected manner.

A dark, middle-aged woman called at the headquarters of the Chicago and Alton road in Chicago and gave information which convinced the authorities that they had to deal with a dangerous league.

The woman, who sought revenge for personal wrongs, revealed the whole plot. She gave names, and described in detail the proceedings of the plotters.

The woman's information was confirmed. Investigations by the railroad officials showed that the robbery had been planned by the James Boys.

To the east and west for one hundred miles picket lines were thrown out to pen in the robbers. All the members of the road-agent league were said to have their homes within thirty miles of Glendale, but it

was thought probable that they might scatter for a time, to throw the officers off the scent.

Bodies of picked men were sent in from the cordon to rake the guarded district, and on September 8, the day following the robbery, the advance guard of captives came in. The sheriff of Saline County, with his posse, rounded up Creed Chapman and Sam Chapman—the latter a mere boy—and John Ziegler, all taken with weapons in their hands.

A fourth robber, John Wilkinson, *alias* Nolen, was arrested the same day, after he had taken a train to Kansas City, where he was endeavoring to gather information about the movements of the officers, for his comrades now realized that they were caught in a trap.

Once landed in jail, young Chapman weakened, giving the names of the other members of the band, in the hope of saving himself.

With their usual good luck, the James Boys escaped capture and pursuit of them was temporarily abandoned. The others were sent to prison for long terms.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## SOME OF THE JAMES BOYS' FAILURES.

A NUMBER OF CLEVERLY PLANNED ROBBERIES THAT DID NOT SUCCEED, AND WHICH CAME NEAR RESULTING DISASTROUSLY FOR THE DARING BANDITS.

To successfully get away with it is the most important part of the game of the train robber. Not only must the plans be perfectly laid, and the whole scheme worked out to the final end, but the get away at the finish must be perfectly arranged for, in order that the escape may be made before the sleuths of the law are on the trail or a volley of shots poured into the escaping party by the train crew and passengers. Although generally successful, the James Boys were by no means infallible, and not a few of their cleverly laid plans went wrong and disaster followed, even resulting in the death of several of their gang, from which luckily for themselves, the bandit chief escaped. It is when the robber's back is turned, when the attention is diverted or when he is riding away from the scene of his crime, that a splendid opportunity is presented to a good marksman to kill with a Winchester or revolver. Here are several cases in point:

The Helena express, of the Northern Pacific Rail-



road, was just crossing the Little Green River on a moonlight night, when the engineer and firemen when suddenly aroused by a stern command, "Throw up your hands, both of you, quick!" They turned to find a man confronting them with a pair of big revolvers and up went their hands. Then the engineer was given orders to stop the train, which he did.

The conductor and the train crew had surmised the reason for the stopping of the train, and they did not venture to show themselves any nearer to the engine than the rear platform of the last car. They would have been fools if they had, for they did not know how many were in the attacking party, nor from what point along the track a shot might come.

At the point of the bandits' pistol the engineer uncoupled the express car from the passenger coaches behind it and from the baggage car in front. Then he returned from the engine and hauled the baggage car out of the siding, coming back on the main track and closing up to the express car.

He got down from the engine to turn the switch at each end of the siding, and again to couple the express car to the engine, on each occasion escorted by the desperado, with the pistol cocked and ready.

During all this period the train crew and the passengers remained inside the car. Indeed, few of the passengers knew that any unusual occurrence had stopped the train.

Under the robbers' direction, the engineer took

the express car up the line a couple of miles away from the rest of the train, where he brought it to a standstill. There was no other train due along the line for several hours, so that there was no immediate danger of a collision, and now the engineer and his captor approached the baggage car, where the latter called upon the express messenger, Ike Perkins. There being no response, the robber produced a stick of dynamite from his boot-leg and made Fischer blow the door open, the explosion tearing out one end of the car.

Approaching this aperture, forcing Fischer to walk before him as a shield, the desperado discovered Perkins, with cocked revolver, standing guard over the property committed to his care, and called upon him to throw his weapon out of the car and empty his pockets. The express messenger obeyed orders. He could not shoot at the robber without endangering the life of Fischer. On the other hand, Perkins afforded a fair mark for Young.

Once inside the express car the Big Swede, cool and masterful, produced another revolver and more dynamite and, covering both of the other men with his battery, he ordered them to blow open the safe, which he knew to contain many thousands of dollars in actual cash.

And now a surprising thing happened. As the safe fell apart at the sound of the explosion a mass of loose yellow coin rolled out on the floor—seventeen thousand dollars in gold double eagles. The

sight temporarily unbalanced the Big Swede's mind, and, with a roar of delight, he dropped both of his pistols and fell head forward into the golden flood, attempting to pick up an armful. In a fraction of a second Perkins seized a piece of the wreckage of the car and struck the desperado a terrible blow over the back of the head.

The bandit did not recover consciousness until noon the following day, when he found himself under guard in the hospital at Montana. He proved to be Bill Horn, one of the James gang, and is at present serving a term of fifty years in State prison, for the hold-up men get long sentences in Montana.

Another instance of a prearranged robbery failed was on the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Road, where several of the James gang, headed by a burly ruffian, known as Al. Redding, attempted a little hold-up without the aid or council of their leaders. In order to accomplish this robbery the bandits boarded the train at a way station and intended to spring the hold-up when it got far away from civilization. But it so happened that the conductor became suspicious of one of the men who was sitting in the smoker and kept an eye on him, and when that person followed him out to the platform, a quarter of an hour after leaving Billings, he was prepared for him. The result was that each drew a revolver, and that Jackman got his out first and shot the other man through the heart.

Meantime, the confederate had reached the tender

of the engine; but, before he had attempted to hold up the engineer, the conductor had pulled the communication cord as a signal to stop the train, upon the shooting of rascal No. 1.

Rascal No. 2 evidently surmised that the scheme to rob the express was not working smoothly, for the engineer saw him jump from the engine as the train began to slow down.

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE DYNAMITE TRAIN ROBBERY.

THE JAMES BOYS RESORTED TO THE USE OF HIGH EXPLOSIVES IN THEIR LATTER-DAY EXPRESS-CAR ROBBERIES, WHERE STRONG SAFES WERE OFTEN ENCOUNTERED.

The introduction of dynamite as a factor in train robbing came with the latter day operations of the James Boys and their gang, and it is said that although the leaders themselves were wary of the high explosive and not over-fond of being in any way associated with it or its usages, they were compelled to adopt it as a means of opening express car safes of the later improved patterns, and, in order to safely and expeditiously accomplish the same, enlisted a former blasting expert in their gang, and to him fell the exclusive task of blowing the captured safes, while the others guarded him while at his work and kept the train crew and officers at bay. The introduction of the dangerous and powerful explosive came at a time when a perfect beehive of criminal industry was buzzing over the west, and lent new terrors to those whose duty it was to pursue and try to capture the death-defying train robbers. The most notable of all dynamite train robberies occurred

on the Missouri Pacific, not many hundred miles west of St. Louis, in August, 1886. It was one of the most important trains of the road. It carried, besides the usual through tourist and passenger coaches, the baggage and mail, and a through express car of the Wells, Fargo Express Company.

The express car, according to the usual custom of the company, carried two treasure boxes, one being a "way safe" for the convenience of the express messenger, the other a through safe, which was billed to San Francisco direct, locked and sealed.

The through safe, of the strongest modern construction, always carried the bulk of the money and valuables for the Pacific coast. After reaching San Antonio from the East, it was again made up and relocked. It was not supposed to be opened *en route*, or until it reached the company's office in San Francisco.

The night run was made without unusual incident. The train reached Clayton (nearly half-way on its journey) at 2.30 in the morning. It was in this vicinity that a previous attempt had been made to rob the train. The next stop was at a siding, called, by courtesy, Samuels, located about twenty miles west of Clayton, and twelve miles from the Rio Grande. To this point the run was made at low speed.

It was a bright, cold morning, with a starry sky, such as can only be seen in southwestern Texas, that made the surrounding prairie almost as light as day. Just before reaching Samuels the fireman remarked

to the engineer that he thought "a bunch of horses was riding the train over to the left."

"Probably some cows broke loose from a herd," Seiver answered him. They paid no more attention to the matter until the engineer pulled up at the siding.

Everything was still about them; the cars closed and dark, and the only sound was the faint puffing of the engine or an occasional remark by the engine-men.

The fireman again remarked that he thought there was "a bunch of something" near them, on the prairie. They had stopped a little short of the siding. The engineer reached for the throttle to pull ahead, when from somewhere either on or near the train came a voice:

"All hunk, boys."

From the prairie came a sudden pounding of hoofs and clattering of spurs and accoutrements as the horsemen dismounted, and six or seven men came running toward the engine and cars. There was no time for the trainmen to realize what had happened, much less make any resistance, before a dropping volley of rifle shots was fired in the direction of the baggage and express car, the bullets thudding against the woodwork.

For a moment the engineer mistook the attacking party for a band of larking cowboys, for the starlight showed them plainly, dressed in "chaps," or riding breeches, sombreros, and the usual cattle-

riders' outfit. But he quickly noted that all the men were masked and carried rifles.

Immediately on firing the volley two of the bandits sprang upon the locomotive, guarding the engineers. Four others made for the express car.

"Just watch and you'll see a new Wild West Show," one of the robbers on the engine remarked.

The remainder of the robbers' troop, if there were more, stayed back out of sight with the horses, "planted" for the usual get-away.

One of the men at the express car yelled to the messenger to open up or it would be worse for him. As there was no response from Messenger Smith or the United States mail clerk, who was in the mail car, the robbers began shouting threats. It was plain, from their language and appearance that the robbers were all Americans, and not a mixed band of Mexicans and renegade raiders.

They paid no attention to the passenger coaches, except to fire once or twice when a sound came from the rear part of the train and to yell to some others in the background to be on the lookout.

Unsuccessful in getting any answer from the messenger, the robbers called something to the mail clerk (who was working like a beaver secreting his valuable packages in the car). His reply enraged them, for one of them cried out with a curse:

"We've monkey'd long enough. Tote that dynamite over here, V all."

A man came from where the horses had been left,



carrying a small parcel in his hands and coolly smoking a cigar or cigarette.

They quickly laid the cartridge and fuse. One explosion was sufficient to shatter the safe so that the robbers could gain entry. Here they secured the real express treasure, in various forms and amounts approximating twenty thousand dollars.

The final booty satisfied them. One of the party brought up a led horse. Across the saddle they tumbled two mail sacks containing the money and miscellaneous matter. The leader shouted to the others to get away, and the men on the engine climbed down, still watching the enginemen, with their rifles in their hands while waiting for the others to fetch the horses.

It was broad daylight by this time—nearly five o'clock in the morning. The robbers had delayed the train almost two hours. The other members of the band sat their horses, in plain sight—an ominous crew of brigands in the pale light of that prairie morning—when the leader sprang down from the car with a parting word to the express messenger:

“Here’s your money,” he said. “We don’t want that now. And here’s the other Johnny’s, too,” referring to the mail clerk, who had also been relieved of his personal possessions. He picked up his rifle and turned to go, with a laugh and a final remark:

“Don’t look so downhearted, Sonny. You ain’t the last express man that’s going to weaken in front of dynamite!”

With a rush and a pounding of hoofs, as they had come, the bandits departed. In a moment only a cloud of dust told of the successful get-away of the first successful railroad dynamiters.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE JAMES BOYS IN MEXICO.

A WILD VISIT TO THE LAND OF PRESIDENT DIAZ AND THE GREAT SENSATION THE BANDITS' VISIT TO THAT COUNTRY CREATED.

After having "played the devil generally," so to speak, in the United States and being the object of pursuit not only of the State and Government troops, but of the police authorities of nearly every Western State, the Pinkertons and railroad police in general, Jesse and Frank James decided—wisely perhaps—that they would leave the dominion of Uncle Sam for awhile and sojourn neath the tropic sun of Mexico, believing rightly that in that genial clime, where police methods are lax and American wrongs adjusted very slowly, they would be safe from pursuit or capture until things blew over a bit. After a few days journey they reached the Mexican border and passed over into the domain which seemed to offer them security and rest, it might be added peace, but that condition of human affairs seems not to have been intended for them, so the white dove perched not long above them. Their first social event after reaching the land of

the cactus was a fandango or dance, which was held near the little country town where they were stopping. Of course, they had not been invited, but that fact cut little figure with gentlemen of as extreme nerve of the James Boys, so they literally invited themselves and went. More than that they actually danced with the Mexican señoritas, and thereby occasioned much jealousy on the part of the native cavaliers.

The onlookers were first amused and then broke out into open ridicule, and laughed at Frank and Jesse and began to mimic, with exaggerated contortions, the awkward dancing of the brothers.

Now, the boys could stand a good deal, but you were not to laugh at them. They were not very fastidious or exacting in their demands, but they would not stand being laughed at! So, quick as thought, down went one of the boldest beneath the strong hand of Frank. In a moment a strongly-built Mexican struck Frank a blow on the cheek which sent him spinning headlong into the ample laps of two Mexican maidens, much to their amazement and disgust. This was no time to waver, so Jesse improved the moment by sending a bullet through the brain of the Mexican who had struck his brother Frank. This stirred the Spanish blood, and, what lovers of the sanguinary would say, the fun began, and the fighting was beautiful. Frank and Jesse made for the door, but their way was blocked by the furious and vengeful hidalgos. Sti-



James Boys in Mexico

lettos gleamed and glistened. But stilletos are poor where revolvers come. A desperate fight followed in which revolvers were freely used on both sides, and many of the revelers were wounded.

Carmen, a town in the northern part of the State of Chihuahua, Mexico, next saw the brother desperadoes. This town is on the line of travel from the silver mines for merchants and seemed to offer exceptional advantages for a hold-up. Just by way of diversion the James boys determined on it, "in order to keep in practice," as they afterwards admitted.

Not long afterward two seemingly affable young Americans approached a pack train of twelve mules from the silver mines and, after making friends with the muleteers and guards, offered to travel along with them a way, in order to help protect them against any stray bandits that might be hiding in the hills. They played their game so well, the simple Mexicans suspected nothing and seemed glad of their company. They represented themselves as being anxious to get back to the States, but afraid to travel alone, owing to bandits and Indians. Frank and Jesse had three other friends who were really in the same box with themselves. The chief of the guard was interviewed with a request that he would allow these young men, who had been inspecting mines, to go under their escort for safety just across the perilous border, of course, agreeing that if danger

came they would fight in the interests of the guard and their treasure.

The chief consented, and so there started out next day from Carmen the procession of mules and their treasures and guards, and these five pious-looking young gentlemen—goody-goody looking enough to teach in Sunday-school or exhort at a mission. And yet Mexico had not five such desperadoes from the North Fork to the most southerly sweep of the Rio Grande!

For two or three days they were watched, but soon all suspicion gave way to confidence. It was noon, about the fifth day out, when the cavalcade halted near a most refreshing fountain. The burdens were taken from the mules that they might graze at leisure in the valley. The muleteers, all save two—who were reserved to stand sentinel over the bags of silver—were enjoying their noon-day siesta. The ingenious five were under a tree apart, holding a quiet converse. The guns of the whole party were stacked against a tree. The two guards on duty over the silver pouches were holding their guns in the most formal and careless manner over their shoulders.

The opportune moment had come!

“Let’s go, boys!” was the brief signal from Jesse, accompanied by his low, shrill whistle.

Crack! went a couple of pistols, and the two armed guards sank quivering to the earth, shot dead! The arms stacked against the tree were de-

stroyed in less time than it takes to tell. The other guards were ordered to hold up their arms, and were at once disarmed. They then ordered the muleteers to put the bags of silver on the best mules. All the rest of the horses were shot. Then Frank and Jesse and their confreres rode off with their stolen treasure, threatening instant death to anyone who dared to follow. The robbers bore their treasure into Texas, divided the spoils, and congratulated each other on the success of the enterprise.

But they did not linger long in Texas, and then when things began to grow hot again they decided upon returning to Mexico, where living was easy and they had no trouble in turning a trick when their cash ran low. They went to a town called Monclova, in Coahuila, and here to their surprise met one of their old companions of wartime days. He had returned after the war to peaceful pursuits and, having become enamored with the bright eyes of a pretty half-breed, had settled down to a quiet rural life in the country.

The sight of the James boys and the sound of their voices woke up a thousand pleasant memories. They talked of the old times, and sang the old songs, and fought the old battles over again, till the Mexican bride was alarmed to think how desperate a man she had married.

Now, it seems the one essential proof of Mexican kindness is to honor your friend who visits



you with a fandango. Frank and Jesse, nothing loth, on the promise that the grace and beauty of Monclova should adorn the scene, accepted the honor. The night came, and with the night the fandango.

The honored guests were summering in beauty's smiles, the host was charmed that all went so well, and the gentle hostess beamed and smiled complacently around. All went well for a time, till the quick eye of Jesse thought he discovered a furtive glance in the eyes of two of the guests. A young lieutenant of the Mexican Army and an American from Matehuela were among the guests. Jesse became more and more convinced that trouble was brewing and informed his brother Frank of his suspicions. His surmises were correct, for both men knew there was a reward of \$1,000 hanging over the James boys' heads and had secretly determined to earn it. They managed to communicate the news of the James brothers' presence to the Mexican authorities, and at midnight the house was surrounded by a large detachment of soldiers. When the festivities were at their gayest the raid was made. The door was suddenly thrown open and a stately uniformed officer strode into the room, followed by a military guard.

A scene of indescribable confusion ensued. The men were astounded, the ladies were panic-stricken. The only calm people at the fandango were the two most concerned.

The officer marched up to Frank and Jesse, and in the name of the Mexican Government demanded their surrender. The brothers laughed derisively in the faces of the officers.

"Will you surrender peacefully?" he asked.

"Never!" was Frank's calm reply.

With that the officer motioned to his guards to move up.

"Stop!" It was Jesse's voice of command. The officer waved to his guards to halt.

"We have a proposition to submit. Will you hear it?"

"If it means surrender, yes," replied the officer.

"It is this," pursued Jesse, not appearing to notice the purport of the officer's reply, "to allow these ladies here to retire, and we will discuss the question with you.

To this the officer finally agreed, and they did so.

"Now will you surrender?" demanded the officer.

"No," yelled Jesse, and the next moment a pistol flashed and the officer lay dead at his feet.

Three more shots rang out in quick succession and three more Mexican soldiers fell dead to the floor.

The guard became demoralized and fled. The boys now rushed for the street. The soldiers guarding the house fired, but they fired aimlessly in their confusion, and Frank and Jesse only received a few scratches.

In a little while the whole town was mad with

excitement, and the wildest stories got abroad. All the ladies of the fandango had been remorselessly butchered by hireling murderers, the soldiers were all shot, and the work of massacre was going on. The wild stories grew and grew. The streets soon surged with a most excited crowd. The fire bells rang, the alarm drums beat at the barracks, the whole of the soldiery formed in line and marched to the scene of the disaster. Men, women and children made the night hideous with their screams. The darkness was dense and favored the fugitives. Frank and Jesse reached their horses, and while Monclova was hunting them about the region of the place of blood they were riding fast and furiously away.

After this desperate affair the James brothers lived quietly in a secluded spot in the mountains until the excitement had died out, and then, perhaps, tired of the bloodshed and excitement amid which they had lived so long, determined to seek rest in the simple pastoral life, and took up a sheep ranch, where they accumulated large and valuable flocks. They seemed doomed to warfare, however, and despite their really earnest efforts to live at peace with the world, even for a short time, they were soon again forced to take up the trail again. This came about by reason of the depredations of one Juan Palacio, a Mexican cattle thief, who had included sheep in his stealings. He robbed the sheepfolds right and left, driving away

whole droves, which he afterwards sold. So long as he confined his stealings to the Mexican herds the James boys paid no attention, but when their sheep began to go they arose to anger and vengeance quickly. Although robbers themselves they quickly resented any attempt to rob them and started out after the greaser who stole their sheep, assisted by a murderer named Almonte, another outlaw.

Palacio proposed to carry away all the cattle, and if the cowboys on the various ranches objected—well, cold lead and a short shrift. And the cold lead first. The stampede was complete. Three of the “cowboys” were killed, but the herds were marched to the banks of the Rio Grande. Two days afterwards Frank and Jesse heard of this from one of the sorely distressed herdsmen. It so happened that Frank and Jesse had possessions in the valley, and their flocks had been carried off by the murdering Mexicans; and, of all men, they were not the men to sit down and be robbed in silence. Their plans were soon formed. Prompt action was needed now. It was in October. Frank and Jesse soon got on Palacio’s trail. They came to El Paso. All was silent, though the robbers had driven through the village. Palacio and Almonte came to camp in the mountains. They felt themselves quite secure, and so fell asleep in fancied safety. But they had but little sleeping time. They were suddenly aroused

by the reports from the avenging pistols of the James boys. Shot after shot was fired, dealing death at every discharge. Roused from the midst of a fitful sleep, the robbers were dazed and bewildered, and thought they were surrounded by a huge company of avengers, and so they fled as fast as their weary legs could carry them, giving themselves no time, for they were in no mood to examine the state of things. Ten of these robbers lay dead, and the rest, terror-stricken, had hurried away in wild confusion to the shelter of the hills. The leaders, Palacio and Almonte, were not with the camp when Frank and Jesse made their murderous onslaught. When the tidings reached them they, of course, imagined what the rest of the thirty thought—that there must be a company of avengers, or “Grino Diablas,” as they called them, from the Pecos Vale. When they came to understand that this successful raid had been carried on by two men only they were furious, and swore by all their gods to be avenged. The whole troop of the twenty-five were on the trail of the brothers to recapture the cattle and strike death to the hearts of the graceless twō who had wrought them such humiliation and decimated their band.

At last they came in sight of the great crowding herds of cattle, and there were only these two men to deal with. Who would give a pin's worth for the chances of the boys?

Arrived on the crest of the hill, he saw fifteen

of these greasers coming up the hill. They were four hundred yards away, but Jesse's trusted long-range Winchester did splendid service. One after another of the Mexicans fell, till by the time Frank came up four of the leaders and one of their mustangs lay dead, and the rest of the company had beat a retreat. As Frank reached the brow of the hill, Jesse said:

"Well, I've prepared a feast for the vultures over yonder."

"How many are down?" asked Frank.

"Oh, only four men and one horse," he answered, with a grim sort of smile.

And the rest of the valiant Mexican host were galloping away for dear life.

## CHAPTER XVII.

MORE CRUEL THAN NERO WERE THE  
JAMES BOYS.

WHEN THOROUGHLY AROUSED OR WHEN THEIR HOME WAS ATTACKED BY RAIDERS, THEIR CRUELTY AND DESIRE FOR REVENGE KNEW NO BOUNDS AND NO UNDERTAKING WAS TOO BLOODTHIRSTY.

There were two sides to the natures of the James Boys, and despite the fact that to their old mother they were all kindness and tenderness, and to women in general they were considerate and gallant, Nero was never more cruel in his worst moods than were these two outlaws when on the trail for revenge. This vindictive spirit was particularly directed against the Pinkerton Detective Agency and its men, which had been remorsefully hunting them down for several years. Several times they had experienced very narrow escapes, and in more than one instance the Pinkerton man never returned to report what happened.

Governors Woodson, of Missouri, and Baxter, of Arkansas, offered large rewards for the apprehension of all or any of the bandits, as did likewise the American Express Company, who engaged Allen

Pinkerton and his efficient force of detectives to hunt them down at all hazards and at any cost.

In a number of instances the pursuers became the pursued, and it was the bandits who chased the detectives instead of vice versa.

The following account of the meeting of Detectives Allen Wright and Daniels, of the Pinkerton force, will give some idea of the character of these desperadoes: "We were riding along the road from Roscoe to Chalk Level, in St. Clair county, which road leads past the house of one Theodore Snuffer. Daniels and myself were riding side by side, and our companion, Wright, was a short distance ahead of us. Some noise behind us attracted our attention, and, looking back, we saw two men on horseback coming toward us; one was armed with a double-barrel shotgun, the other with revolvers; don't know if the latter had a shotgun or not; the one that had the shotgun carried it cocked, both barrels, and ordered us to halt; Wright drew his pistol, but then put spurs to his horse and rode off; they ordered him to halt, and shot at him, and shot off his hat, but he kept on riding. Daniels and myself stopped, standing across the road on our horses; they rode up to us and ordered us to take off our pistols and drop them on the road, one of them covering me all the time with his gun. We dropped our pistols on the ground, and one of the men told the other to follow Wright and bring him back, but he refused to go, saying he would stay with him; one of the men then picked up



the revolvers we had dropped, and, looking at them, remarked they were damned fine pistols, and that we must make them a present of them; one of them asked me where we came from, and I said, 'Osceola;' he then wanted to know what we were doing in this part of the country; I replied, 'Rambling around.' One of them said: 'You were up here one day before.' I replied that we were not. He then said we had been at the Springs. I replied that we had been at the Springs, but had not been inquiring for them; that we did not know them; they said detectives had been up there hunting for them all the time, and they were going to stop it. Daniels then said: 'I am no detective; I can show you who I am and where I belong,' and one of them said he knew him, and then turned to me and said: 'What in hell are you riding around here with all them pistols on for?' and I said: 'Good God! is not every man wearing them that is traveling, and have I not as much right to wear them as anyone else?' Then the one that had the shotgun said: 'Hold on, young man, we don't want any of that,' and then lowered the gun, cocked, in a threatening manner. Then Daniels had some talk with them, and one of them got off his horse and picked up the pistols; two of them were mine and one was Daniels'; the one mounted had the gun drawn on me, and I concluded that they intended to kill us. I reached my hand behind me and drew a No. 2 Smith & Wesson pistol and cocked and fired at the one on horseback; my horse became frightened

at the report of the pistol and turned to run; then I heard two shots and my left arm fell; I had no control over my horse, and he jumped into the bushes before I could get hold of the rein with my right hand to bring him into the road; one of the men rode by and fired two shots at me, one of which took effect in my left side, and I lost all control of my horse again, and he turned into the brush, when a small tree struck me and knocked me out of the saddle. I then got up and staggered across the road and lay down until I was found. No one else was present."

Captain Allen was struck very hard in the left side, two inches above the hip; he was carried back to Roscoe, where he lingered for a period of six weeks, and then died, surrounded by his family, that had come to him from Chicago, directly after the shooting. His remains were enclosed in a metallic case and returned to Chicago, where they were buried with Masonic honors. Ed Daniels was laid away in the little churchyard at Osceola.

The torture and murder of Detective Wicher, also of the Pinkerton force, by the James boys, was particularly brutal and aroused the entire country when its details became known.

Pinkerton received information that the James boys and others of the band of robbers were in hiding near Kearney, in Clay county, Missouri, and he determined to send some brave, trusty man out there to definitely locate them, get into their confidence and

prepare the way for an early capture of the whole gang. Pinkerton had come to the conclusion that open pursuit of the bandits would never result in their capture, for they had too many friends in the community where they operated to make it possible to apprehend them. They always had timely warning of the approach of an enemy, and ready shelter in the houses of their friends on a moment's notice. The chief of detectives, therefore, resolved to capture the gang through strictly detective methods, and called upon his force for a man to do the delicate and dangerous work.

John W. Wicher, of Chicago, one of Pinkerton's most trusted men, volunteered for this dangerous duty. Wicher was scarcely thirty years of age, but had seen much service as a detective, and was considered by Pinkerton to be one of his bravest, clearest-headed and most trusty men.

Young Wicher was fully informed of the dangers of such a mission, but his self-reliance and pride made him anxious to make the attempt which had already cost the lives of so many courageous officials. The chief gave his consent, and Wicher set out at once for the Samuels residence. In the early part of March the detective arrived in Liberty, where he soon laid his schemes before the sheriff of Clay county, and asked for assistance when the time and circumstances were ripe for a strike. The Sheriff promised all needful aid, and gave Wicher all the information in his possession concerning the habits

and rendezvous of the James and Younger boys.

Determined to either capture the James boys or forfeit his life in the attempt, Detective Wicher disguised himself as a tramp and started for the home of the bandits. He reached there in due time, and before he could even realize it had fallen into their clutches. Realizing that it was useless for him to try resistance at that time, he decided to resort to a ruse and solemnly averred that he was only an humble wayfarer. They accused him of being a Pinkerton man, which he indignantly denied.

"Well, gentlemen, I am nothing more than a poor man, without as much as a dollar in my pocket, and what I have told you as to my purpose is true. If you will be good enough to let me proceed, or furnish me with means by which I can secure work, I shall be thankful."

At this the bandits laughed scornfully, while Jesse James proceeded with the examination:

"I think you are from Chicago, and when you arrived at Liberty a few days ago you wore much better clothes than you now have on; besides, it seems that you and Moss (the sheriff) have some business together. Say, now, young fellow, haven't you set out to locate the James boys, whom you have found rather unexpectedly?"

Wicher saw that he was in the hands of his enemies, and his heart beat in excited pulsation as he thought of the young wife he had so recently wedded, and from whom an eternal separation appeared

certainty. Dropping his head as if resigning himself to cruel fate, Wicher hoped to deceive his captors, and in an unguarded moment be able to draw his pistol and fight for his life. Like a flash from a hazy cloud the detective thrust his hand into his bosom and succeeded in grasping his pistol, but ere he could use it the bandits sprang upon him, and in the grip of three strong men he was helpless. He was then disarmed and firmly bound by small cords which Frank James produced. Clell Miller went into the woods and soon returned, leading three horses, on the largest of which Wicher was placed and his feet tied under the horse's belly. A gag was placed tightly in his mouth, and Jesse James, mounting behind, the desperadoes rode into the deepening woods with their victim. They crossed the Missouri River at Independence Landing, and just before day they halted in the black shadows of a copse in Jackson county. Here they prepared for the torture and execution of their prisoner. Wicher was taken from his horse and bound fast to a tree; the gag was removed from his mouth, and then the bandits tried to extort from him information concerning the plans of Pinkerton and the number and names of the detectives he had engaged in the attempt to capture the outlaws.

Though they pricked him with their bowie knives and bent his head forward with their combined strength until the spinal column was almost broken, and practiced other atrocious torments, yet Wicher never spoke. He knew that death was his portion,

and he defied the desperadoes and dared them to do their worst.

Finding all their endeavors fruitless, Jesse and Frank James murdered their victim, one of them shooting him through the heart and the other through the brain. The body was then carried to the nearest highway, where it was left to be found next day by a farmer who was driving into Independence.

## CHAPTER XVIII

## THE IRON MOUNTAIN TRAIN ROBBERY.

Perhaps the most celebrated train robbery committed by the James brothers and their close accomplices, the Youngers, was that of the Iron Mountain express in Missouri, near a place called Wayne, which for daring and actual audacity certainly eclipses all their other achievements in this line. It was the big sensation of the entire country at the time, and is still recalled by Westerners as the most desperate affair of its kind that ever occurred in that country. The spot where the robbery occurred was ideal, inasmuch as it was inhabited by only a few people. The surrounding country was a perfect jungle, which made the escape of the bandits comparatively easy after the perpetration of their crime.

The Iron Mountain express was due at Wayne at 5.40 P. M., and a little before that hour a band of six men rode up on horseback, halting a short distance from the railroad station. They were all stalwart fellows, wearing gray felt hats and old blue army overcoats, and without close inspection might have been taken for a detachment of





United States troopers, especially as they carried big revolvers in their belts and Winchester rifles in their hands. Dismounting, they fastened their horses to a clump of trees near by, and walked quietly up to the little railroad station. The few loiterers about the station were greatly surprised when the sextette drew their pistols and ordered them inside the station. But they stood not on the order of their going, and simply went without parley. They were all promptly locked inside, under threat of instant death if they attempted to escape.

Now in absolute control of the station, the brigands prepared to receive the Iron Mountain express. The switch leading into the side track was thrown open in order to prevent the engineer from running past the station in case his suspicions should be aroused, and a red signal flag was planted in the center of the track immediately in front of the station platform. Then the robbers lit cheeroots and moved back into the shadow of the station house to await the arrival of the train.

The robbers had a definite purpose in holding up the Iron Mountain train. In the railroad robbery of the previous July they had missed \$75,000 in gold by stopping the wrong train—the one which preceded the treasure. Now they had learned that Treasurer Stanchfield, of the Clearwater Lumber Company, was to be on this train with \$5,000, no mean sum in those days. Moreover,

they counted on cleaning out the Adams Express car.

They had well timed the arrival of the train and had not long to wait, for in a very few minutes the faint trail of smoke from the locomotive was seen in the distant sky, and soon the puffing of the engine was heard as it came speeding across the prairie. Wayne was not a regular stop, trains stopping there on being signalled. This the robbers knew, and set the proper flag by the track for the train to halt. The engineer saw it and, suspecting nothing, brought his train to a stop beside the station platform.

For a moment there was no one to be seen. Then the leader of the gang made a dash for the engine cab and climbed into it with a drawn revolver.

"You fellows need some exercise," he remarked to the helpless engineer and firemen. "Climb down and take to the woods. . . . No foolishness! You walk straight out, and don't come back until we whistle for you, unless you're tired of living."

The conductor sprang down to see what the trouble was. He found himself looking into the muzzles of two revolvers, and was greeted with a command to throw up his hands or have his head blown off.

"Come along to the coop," the robber added cheerfully, through the black calico mask which he wore over his face.

A glance forward showed him that three other masked men were approaching with revolvers in their hands, and that he had no choice but to obey.

The work of going through the cars was done expeditiously to the accompaniment of a running fire of remarks. Then, after finishing with the passengers and warning them as they valued their lives to keep quiet, the bandits turned their attention to the express and mail car. They broke open the safe of the Adams Express Company, but in it they found only \$1,080. One of them reported, from the door, the smallness of the sum to the leader, who was keeping a watchful eye upon the cars and the prisoners.

"Rip up Uncle Sam and see what he's got inside," he answered.

The United States mail bags were immediately cut open and rifled. In one letter the robbers found \$2,000 in bills, and varying sums in a number of others. Coolly counting up the entire proceeds, the looters found that their booty was nearly \$12,000, including \$1,260 from the mail bags.

The robbers, "who were all six-footers and heavily armed, escaped on fine, blooded horses, going in a southerly direction."

This remarkable document wound up with the statement: "This thing made a h—l of an excitement in this part of the country.

"Here's the last item," the leader said, when he handed the paper to one of the trainmen. "We

like to do things in style and save people all the trouble we can. All right, Al!" he shouted to the conductor, "you can travel on now."

Just as the engineer was pulling out, the robber who had thrown the switch discovered that he had left his overcoat on the track beside the switchboard. The engineer was again stopped while the fellow went forward and secured his coat, throwing back the switch at the same time.

As the passenger cars passed the robbers on the platform they waved their hands with sarcastic farewells.

"We'll see you some other day when we get short of funds," the leader cried.

A minute later they threw open the door of the station and released the prisoners. Then, mounting their "fine, blooded horses," the six ruffians rode leisurely away.

The robbery created a tremendous sensation, particularly as it was ascertained that the outrage was committed by the same men who had robbed the Hot Springs stage coach only two weeks before. Aside from the amount of the booty, which was a secondary consideration, the authorities, including the railroad, express and postoffice officials, realized that the audacity of the crime called for immediate action.

There was not the slightest doubt of the identity of the brigands. As an editorial writer remarked at the time: "No continent could pro-

duce two bands of such blithesome ruffians!" Besides, forty pairs of eyes had studied them, and there was plenty of material for identification.

Rewards amounting to a large sum were at once offered for the apprehension of the outlaws. After the Governor of Missouri had sent his indignant message to the Legislature, that body declined to allow him the use of the militia or to vote sufficient money for the organization of a secret police, but it did vote \$10,000 to use as rewards.

The Governor immediately offered \$2,000 apiece for the capture of the Iron Mountain desperadoes and subsequently the Governor of Arkansas offered \$2,500 more. The Postoffice Department also offered a reward of \$5,000, making an aggregate of \$17,500 from these sources alone for the apprehension of the robbers, "living or dead."

The Missouri Pacific Railroad and the Adams Express Company, besides offering any reasonable sum in rewards, also instituted vigorous measures to capture the gang. A number of St. Louis detectives were put on the case, and the Pinkerton Detective Agency sent out two of their best detectives.

Despite all these efforts to capture them, however, the James boys seemed to bear charmed lives, for they had seemingly vanished as though the earth had opened and swallowed them up.

## CHAPTER XIX.

THE GREAT MAMMOTH CAVE STAGE  
ROBBERY.

DARING HOLD-UP OF THE COACH FILLED WITH SIGHT-SEERS AND THE EXCITING TIME THAT FOLLOWED THE ROBBERY.

Generally, after a big train or bank robbery, the James Boys retired to their home with their booty and lived the easy and simple life until it was gone. This period of inactivities, of course, varied in duration according to the magnitude of the haul and the laxness or activity of the law officers, who were in pursuit. If they lagged, and the bankroll was a big one, the desperadoes stayed home and took it easy for months. If not, they were on the warpath again in a week or two. As long as they kept away from the gambling table they had money, but very soon after they began bucking the tiger, they were invariably broke, for bold and successful robbers as they were, they lacked tact with the pasteboards, and were known to be very poor card sharps. It was while taking one of these periodical recuperative spells

that they planned the robbery of the Mammoth Cave coach, the details of which are given below.

It occurred in September, 1880, at which season the great cave is visited by thousands of tourists from all parts of the country and world. One of the favorite routes to this natural wonder is by way of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad to Cave City, and thence by stage to the caves, about ten miles distant.

On the day of the robbery of the stage the passengers were the Right Rev. Bishop Gregg, of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Texas; Mr. Breckenridge, president of the First National Bank of San Antonio, and other ladies and gentlemen of good standing—eleven in all. Merry, happy souls, who knew the brighter side of life, and knew no lack of earthly gear. The stage called at its usual halting place about six o'clock in order that man and beast might be refreshed.

Just after resuming their journey the driver descried ahead of him six mounted men, whom he took for rancheros; but as they drew nearer he became a little puzzled. They were mounted not on the rough mustang of the prairies, but on splendid American horses of the best breed. The driver became a little nervous.

It was about 6 P. M. that the stage was nearing Cave City on its return from the cave, that it was suddenly confronted by a number of masked horsemen, in a dark and deeply wooded ravine. In

answer to a pistol shot, which whizzed close to his head, the driver reined up his horses, and the coach was at once surrounded by heavily armed horsemen. The passengers, in terror, looked into the muzzles of what seemed to be a whole battery of revolver barrels and were ordered to alight. It was also explained by the highwaymen that the order applied to women as well as men.

"Come, tumble out!" was the brief command. "Tumble out quick, if you don't want to die where you sit."

A scene of confusion ensued. The women of the party lost all presence of mind, and without the slightest regard for the proprieties, clambered over and clung to the gentlemen of the party for protection. Surely, never in the world, was a bishop hugged by a very ponderous maiden lady, of a very certain age, as she begged him for the love of God to protect her from "those wicked, horrid men."

But the bishop was more in danger than his stout-clinging friend. Indeed, there was little danger to the women of the company, if they would but keep quiet. Jesse James did most of the talking on the occasion, though Younger occasionally put in a word. The ladies were assured they had nothing to fear, if only the men behaved themselves. "Behaving themselves" on this occasion meant simply getting out of the stage and delivering all their possessions quietly.

"Come, tumble out or die!" was Jesse's brief command.



And now came the plunder of personal possession.

"Gentlemen and ladies," said Jesse in a mock politeness, "it will be our painful duty now to trouble you for the money and jewelry you may chance to have about you."

"Do you mean to rob us?" asked the bishop in a tone of offended dignity, as he gazed on the scene.

"Oh! fie, fie," said the shocked young robber; "you shouldn't use such ugly language! Rob you! Oh! never, never! We would scorn the action! Do we look like robbers? No, gentlemen, we only wish to relieve you of a burden—that's all; so out with your money and quick, we have no time to spare."

"Don't you call that robbery?" asked the bishop.

"Come, now, old coon! Dry up, or you'll not have an opportunity to ask any more nonsenical questions. Hand out your money.

The bishop reluctantly complied, handing out his pocketbook.

The eight gentlemen were all searched, but very little was obtained till they came to Mr. Breckenridge, of the Louisville bank. He proved to be a big bonanza. They obtained from him over \$1,000. The ladies were ordered to yield up their treasures. One was evidently poor. They examined her pocketbook, and Jesse said:

"Madam, is that all you have?"

"Every cent in the world," she replied.

"And how far are you going?"

"To Louisville, sir."

"Well, then, take your money; we won't trouble you."

To her intense surprise, the affrighted old lady found, when she got home, that Jesse had slipped a twenty-dollar bill into her poorly furnished pocket-book, and she was wont to say in after years:

"Well, well, the James boys were bad enough, Heaven knows, but they might have been a good deal worse."

Being in need of fresh horses, the James boys took the fine pair of leaders that belonged to the coach and rode away, leaving the coach and its passengers to proceed to Cave City with a single pair of horses, sadly and slowly, as may be imagined.

## CHAPTER XX.

QUICKEST EXPRESS CAR ROBBERY ON  
RECORD.

ONE OF THE NEATEST AND MOST QUIET TRAIN HOLD-UPS IN THE HISTORY OF THE JAMES BOYS' DARING ESCAPADES.

Alacrity was always one of the characteristics of the James boys' robberies, but peace and quiet were not. They were usually accompanied by wild yells, pistol shots, etc., doubtless to terrify the victims into easy surrender. The robbery of an express car attached to a Missouri and Northern train, near Joplin, created one of the biggest sensations of the day by reason of the speed with which it was accomplished and the lack of bravado which characterized its success.

Four men assembled near the railroad station one dark night and boarded the west bound train when it stopped for a minute to take several passengers aboard.

Four men gathered about the depot a few minutes before the train was due and, after engaging the

old crossing watchman in conversation, suddenly grabbed him, made him a prisoner in his watch box and took away his signal lanterns. Warning him that they would shoot him if he made the least noise or outcry, they departed down the track, after locking him in. When the train had gotten a little way past the station the engineer noted signals ahead and brought his train to a stop. Instantly the engineer and fireman were confronted by an armed man in the engine cab, who drew a pair of pistols and warned them not to move. More armed men had held up the conductor and train crew, while several entered the express car and bade the express messenger open the safe on pain of instant death if he refused. Seeing no way out of it, he obeyed.

The United States safe contents were speedily transferred to a grain sack without examination. The messenger once more found himself in peril, because he had no key to the Adams through safe, but, as his explanation was reasonable, the robbers were convinced. One of the robbers then ran out, got the fireman's hammer and began banging at the safe. He was unable to produce much impression, whereupon a herculean bandit caught the hammer, and with a few tremendous blows broke a hole in the side, into which he vainly attempted to force his hand. The first striker, however, remarked that he "wore a No 7 kid," and could do better.

In just two minutes the safe was plundered and the booty bagged. No attempt was made to rob the

passengers. The train boy's box was broken open and peanuts and apples were gobbled up voraciously. Only one or two shots were fired from the train, the robbers keeping up a fusilade on both sides and moving from point to point, so that in the darkness it seemed as though the brush was full of men.

The train boy had a revolver, and early in the fracas he stepped out on the platform and blazed away at one of the robbers, who gave a loud, croaking laugh and called out: "Hear that little —— bark!" As soon as the safes had been emptied the robbers told the trainmen to remove the obstructions before and behind and pull out, which was done with alacrity. The train was stopped an hour and ten minutes, and the booty secured amounted to fifteen thousand dollars.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## JESSE JAMES SHOT BY GEORGE SHEPHERD.

AFTER THE GLENDALE ROBBERY SHEPHERD UNDERTOOK TO CAPTURE THE DARING ROBBER AND CAME NEAR KILLING HIM IN THE ATTEMPT.

Perhaps the narrowest escape that Jesse James ever had from death was at the hands of George Shepherd, a daring law officer, who started out to bring him in dead or alive and came very near doing the former. For once in his life Jesse had met his equal with a revolver, and it did not take him long to find it out. After being severely wounded he managed to escape by the mere "skin of his teeth." It all came about in this way:

Living in Kansas City at the time of the robbery was George Shepherd, one of the most courageous men that ever faced danger. He was one of Quantrell's lieutenants, and fought in all the terrible and unmerciful encounters of that chief of the black banner. He was at Lawrence, and rode beside the James boys in that dreadful cyclone of remorseless murder. He had run the gauntlet of a hundred rifles and



The Duel on Horseback

fought against odds which it appeared impossible to escape. After the close of the war Jesse James accepted Colonel Shepherd as a leader and followed him into Texas, and would still be following his counsels had not circumstances separated them.

Major Leggitt evolved a scheme out of his hours of study toward the capture of Jesse James. He sent for Shepherd, who was working for Jesse Noland, a leading dry goods merchant of Kansas City, and to the ex-guerilla he proposed his scheme. It was this: Shepherd, being well known to have formerly been a comrade of Jesse James, it was to be reported that undoubted information had reached the authorities establishing Shepherd's connection with the Glandale robbery. A report of this was to be printed upon a slip of paper having printed matter upon the reverse side, so as to appear like a newspaper clipping. Shepherd was to take this printed slip, find Jesse James and propose to join him, saying that he was being hounded by detectives, and, although innocent, he felt that his only safety was in uniting his fortunes with Jesse and his fearless band. This being accomplished, Shepherd was to find opportunity for killing Jesse James, and the reward for him, dead or alive, was to be divided. In addition to this, Shepherd was to be provided with a horse and to receive \$50 per month during the time of his service.

The conditions and terms were satisfactory to Shepherd, and the latter part of October, about two weeks



after the Glendale robbery, he started out in quest of Jesse James.

The plan of Shepherd's operations and the manner in which he accomplished his hazardous undertaking is herewith detailed just as he related the story to the writer, but, while the relation is interesting, it is now proved to be untrue in part.

When Shepherd left Kansas City he was armed with several revolvers and a dagger. He rode direct to the home of Jesse James and, telling a concocted story, managed to arrange a meeting with the gang in the woods near by. He was duly installed as a member of the James gang, and his first assignment was reconnoitering a proposed bank robbery at Empire City, to which place he preceded the gang. Upon his arrival he found the bank lighted up and a dozen men inside armed with rifles and shotguns. Shepherd at once suspected that the news he had imparted to the authorities had been acted upon.

Finding everything in readiness to meet the intended attack, Shepherd went into a restaurant, and, while eating his supper, Tom Cleary, an old acquaintance, greeted him. After supper the two went to Cleary's house and remained all night, and Shepherd told his friend the part he was acting in the effort to capture Jesse James. Ed Cleary, a brother of Tom, was also informed of the scheme, and Shepherd asked their assistance, or, at least, to follow him the next morning to the camp of the bandits. The understand-

ing was at the time Shepherd left the outlaws that he should return to the camp by 9 o'clock Sunday morning, and, if his report was favorable, the raid on the bank would be made Sunday night.

Shepherd kept the appointment and returned to the place where the bandits had encamped, but found the camp deserted. He thought this strange, but soon found the old sign of a "turn out" had been made to let him know where they were. It is well known that the James boys and their comrades frequently separated. They had a sign, however, by which it was not difficult for them to find one another, and he soon joined the gang just outside the town to find that they were already aware the bank was guarded. They asked him how about it, but he professed ignorance of who had tipped off the intended raid, and suggested they get out of the locality as soon as possible. This was agreed upon, and they rode away.

When they reached a point twelve miles south of Galena, all parties maintaining their respective positions, Shepherd gave a smart jerk of the bridle rein, which caused his horse to stop, while Jesse rode on. It was the work of an instant, for as Jesse's horse gained two steps forward Shepherd drew one of his large pistols and, without speaking a word, fired, the ball taking effect in Jesse's head one inch behind the left ear. Only the one shot was fired, for Shepherd saw the result of his shot, and Jesse plunged headlong from his horse and lay motionless on the ground,

as if death had been instantaneous. Shepherd says he viewed the body for nearly a minute before either of the outlaws made any demonstration. Ed Miller first started toward him in a walking pace, and then Cummings and the unknown drew their pistols and rode swiftly after him. Shepherd's horse was swift, and he put him to the greatest speed, soon distancing the unknown, but Cummings was mounted on a superior animal, and the chase for three miles was a hot one. Each of the two kept firing, but the rapid rate at which they were riding made the shots ineffectual. Seeing that he was pursued only by Cummings, who was gaining on him, Shepherd stopped and wheeled his horse, and at that moment a bullet struck him in the left leg just below the knee, producing, however, only a flesh wound. As Cummings dashed up Shepherd took deliberate aim and fired, and Cummings reeled in the saddle, turned his horse and retreated. Shepherd says he feels confident that he struck Cummings hard in the side and that he killed Jesse James. He rode back to Galena, where he remained two weeks under a surgeon's care, and after recovery returned to Kansas City.

As it afterward proved, the bullet only grazed Jesse James' skull and knocked him senseless from his horse. It did not even penetrate the skull, and he soon recovered from the injury.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## MYSTERIOUS ROCK ISLAND ROBBERY.

HOW THE JAMES BOYS RIFLED AN EXPRESS CAR WITHOUT CREATING MUCH EXCITEMENT UNTIL IT WAS ALL OVER AND HOW THEY GOT AWAY WITH A LOT OF RICH PLUNDER.

The James brothers and their gang were not alone noted for bold and desperate hold-ups and train robberies, but they have been credited, as well, with a number of robberies that were accomplished with remarkable stealth and quietude. Like the bold lion in some of their robberies, taking all sorts of chances of being shot or captured, they were like the treacherous leopard in others, took comparatively no chances, and had finished the job almost before anyone, even in the train, realized what had happened. They were brazenly bold or almost cowardly stealthy, it seems, as the occasion demanded or their fancy dictated.

The following story of the robbery on the Rock Island road will give an idea of how quietly and mysteriously some of their robberies were accomplished. One cold, snowy night in March, 1886,

the Kansas express, running over the Rock Island road, started westward from Chicago. The train was heavier than usual that night.

Coupled on in front of the regular passenger coaches the train carried two express cars, the first one given over entirely to express, mostly through matter, and the other to express and baggage.

The first car was in charge of Messenger Kellogg Nichols, a man of middle age, who had spent twenty years in the service of the express company. The combined baggage and express car was in charge of Baggage man Newton Watt, who previous to his trip had been head brakeman of the train and who had taken the place of the regular baggage man, who was ill. The rear brakeman, a young fellow named Henry Swartz, became front brakeman for the trip.

Both the express and combination car had doors on either end, besides the large sliding doors on the sides, but the front part of Messenger Nichols' car was blocked with packages. The second car, besides carrying additional local express freight, also contained Messenger Nichols' safe, a small iron trunk with a peculiar lock, the key of which Nichols carried in his pocket attached to a chain, according to regulations.

The safe was known to contain a considerable sum of money. The messenger had referred to the fact in checking out his run, remarking jok-

ingly, as he deposited a bulky money package in it: in it:

"If I had that I wouldn't work tonight. I'd take a day off."

The duties of the messenger required him to work in both cars, but the heaviest part of his work was in the front car, where he repaired to check up his run as soon as they pulled out of the Chicago depot, leaving Baggage-man Watt to look after the combination car.

After passing Blue Island, the next regular stop was at Joliet, about forty miles from Chicago. Here some express matter was put off, and shortly before 1 o'clock on that stormy March morning the train proceeded on toward Morris, a run of about forty-seven minutes.

Minooka was between Joliet and Morris, but it was not a stopping point for this train. The engine merely slowed up on a heavy grade outside the town, whistled for the station, and gathering speed again, thundered onward to Morris.

Thirty minutes later the snow-covered train rolled into the station. Conductor Wagner dropped off the train and came forward to get his orders with the engineer. Swartz, the head brakeman, also jumped down, and at the same time an apparition in the shape of Watt, the baggageman, disheveled, stammering, staring as if he had seen a ghost, burst upon the astonished conductor.

"Great God," he cried in terror, with his eyes

almost bulging out of his head. "Look in there. The safe all gone and papers all over the car?" The man was almost insane with fright and surprise and could hardly talk, yet he managed to mutter something about Messenger Nichols and swung his lantern into the car, calling him by name and looking for him. By this time the conductor and others of the train crew came forward and, entering the car, began a search for the missing messenger. They found his dead body in the forward part of the car, under a great pile of disordered express matter. His head had been battered in as with an iron bar, his left arm was broken at the wrist, probably with the same bludgeon as he fought to ward off the blow that killed him, and a bullet hole was found in his shoulder.

Obviously it was the blows on the head, inflicted, apparently, with some blunt instrument, that had caused the death of the unfortunate messenger.

There was evidence of a terrible struggle. Up and down the car, on the floor and sides and over the express packages, blood was spattered right and left. Whomsoever the messenger had fought, the conflict must have been desperate in the extreme.

It seemed incomprehensible that this short, slender little man of forty, wounded and battered as he must have been, could have been so tenacious unless it was plain to him that he was fighting for his life. That there must have been more than one

assailant was shown by the fact that in the clenched hands of the messenger were found locks of different colored hair, stained now with the messenger's blood.

The messenger's safe had been blown open and looted, all the money and valuables having been taken and the papers thrown all over the car. The loss was about \$25,000. When the confusion of the first surprise had somewhat abated, the baggageman was asked to tell his story, and related the following remarkable experience, which goes to show the wonderful quickness and surprise with which the robbery was accomplished. The run was new to him and he had been unusually closely engrossed in his work for that reason.

In the noise of the train and storm he had heard nothing unusual until the engine whistled for Minooka. The moment after the barrel of a revolver was poked over his shoulder against the side of his head. Glancing up with a start, he saw a man standing behind him, his face covered with a mask.

"If you move before this train gets to Morris," the man said, "you'll get your head blown off by that man up there."

Wat looked up at the ventilator in the roof of the car. A hand holding a big pistol was poked through the ventilator, the pistol pointing down at the bag-



gageman. Then he realized that there was another robber on the roof of the car.

Sitting there under the threatening muzzle of the big gun, he heard the robber behind him unlock and empty the express safe.

"I couldn't give the alarm," Watt said. "They swore they would kill me if I moved. They must have gone to the front car and taken the safe key away from Nichols before they came back to me.

As a matter of fact, the murdered messenger's key with the snapped chain was in the safe-lock.

Watt sat still under the revolver until the train reached Morris. When the engine whistled for that station he noticed suddenly that the hand and gun had been withdrawn from the ventilator in the roof, and turning cautiously, he found himself alone in the car with the front door closed.

Then he immediately gave the alarm to Conductor Wagner, who was with Swartz, the head brakeman. Of the fight in the express car and the murder of Nichols he had had no intimation until the train stopped.

It was one-thirty-five when the train reached Morris. By two o'clock the town was aroused, all the passengers were up, and the station was crowded with excited men, while telegrams and orders were flying back and forth between Morris and Chicago.

The local police, the railroad detectives and the Pinkerton men were quickly on the trail of the rob-

bers. but they failed to capture them even after the most strenuous efforts, although the evidence clearly proved it was another "trick" turned by the James boys.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## THE JAMES BOYS AS GAMBLERS.

DESPERATE POKER PLAYERS, WHO STAKED THEIR LAST DOLLAR EVERY TIME AND LOST THOUSANDS—THIS WAS WHERE MUCH OF THEIR STOLEN PLUNDER WENT. KNOWN TO HAVE LOST \$25,000 IN A SINGLE NIGHT'S PLAYING.

Like many more criminals, the James boys were inveterate gamblers. They lost over gaming tables in all parts of the country, nearly all the money they accumulated, and never made a protest when the game was fair. They have been known to part with \$25,000 in a night without a word, but on other occasions have turned the gambling rooms into a shambles when they suspected the cards had been stacked on them or other unfair advantage taken of them. They would bet on anything, and when no other opportunity for gambling offered have been known to place a lump of sugar on the table in front of each person and bet hundreds of dollars as to which one a fly would light on first. They always boasted this game was absolutely square, as there could be no collusion with the

flies. It was one of their favorite diversions. Their uncle was owner and proprietor of the Paso Robel Hotel, at Hot Springs, Nev., and there they went to gamble and recuperate. They became friendly with everybody, and visitors from all over the country little suspected the two gentlemanly young men were the most desperate and notorious robbers the world had ever known. After a time their health greatly improved, and feeling they might wear their welcome out, or, in other words, that their real character might be discovered, they decided to go further west, with California as their ultimate destination.

Moreover, just at that time the newspapers of the Pacific Coast were filled with thrilling accounts of daring robberies by "road agents" who infested the mountain passes of California, Nevada and Colorado. These accounts were read with avidity by Frank and Jesse James in their quiet retreat at their uncle's hotel. The old desperado spirit was reawakened within them, and they began to look back upon their three months of indolent rest as just so much of their lives thrown away. The fever of unrest burned on in their veins until it drove them forth into the mountains in search of adventure. Burnishing up their old-time trusty friends—their ever-faithful revolvers—they buckled on their fighting paraphernalia and sallied forth into the mountain passes, prepared for any sort of adventure that might happen to turn up. When we remember that the mining camps of that region were filled with reckless adventurers, cut-throats and gamblers,

it is not at all surprising that Frank and Jesse James did not have far to go before they found all the excitement and adventure they wanted.

One bright, sunshiny morning Frank and Jesse, with two of their old guerrilla comrades from Missouri, whom they chanced to fall in with, took a journey into the region of the Sonoma Mountains, where a small tributary of the Humbolt river cuts the foot hills of the range. There was a new encampment called "Battle Mountain." And, to use the emphatic language of these four Missouri boys, they thought they would break the monotony of life by going to Battle Mountain "just to shake up the encampment."

These camping towns spring up as if by magic, and very often just as readily pass from sight. So that now the traveler in these mountain regions comes often upon the relics of a deserted hamlet which has been simply left to rot, when the gold played out and the gang moved further on. Hard work by day and by night, women, whiskey and cards is the daily routine of these mushroom towns. One of these dugout villages was known as Battle Mountain, and it was well named, for battles with Colt revolvers were the nightly program, and gambling and every other form of dissipation were the favorite diversions. Into this town—if such it may, by courtesy, be called—the James boys stumbled, and, of course, determined to "buck the tiger." They did not drink and were proud of their skill with cards. One fatal night they were playing in the "Golden Rule" gambling hall

about the stiffest poker game they had ever engaged in. The table was laden with bags of gold and thousands of dollars were passing to and fro with the varying fortunes of the cards.

The gambler was about to remark something or other when his opponent cut him short by saying: "I discarded a king; when the cut for your deal was made the bottom card was exposed. It was a king. You got your third king from the bottom. You must not do that again."

"You lie!" retorted the gambler, with a gleam of murder in his eyes.

Immediately all was confusion in the room. An ominous calm prevailed for a moment, while all eyes were fixed upon the excited players. Then Jesse rose to the emergency. Cheating had been charged and the lie given direct. This meant death to one or the other of the parties concerned. Jesse's ready revolver decided that it should not be his friend. While the excited gambler was fumbling for his weapon Jesse's trusty pistol cracked twice, and the murder-plotting gambler fell dead on the floor. Lightning quick the partner of the slain gambler made a lunge at Jesse with a dirk, but with a quick movement Jesse avoided the knife, swung round his ready revolver, cracked away at the gambler, and literally blew the entire top of his head off.

Pandemonium reigned at once. With a wild yell the excited gamblers made a rush for Jesse and his companions.

"Back, you devils, back!" cried Jesse. The wild mob wavered for a moment, the lights went out, and Jesse and his comrade under the cover of darkness made a dash for the door.

Once outside they turned and fired a volley into the midst of the howling mob of pursuers. Two men dropped dead and three were mortally wounded. Some one struck a light. The scene that the mob of demoralized gamblers gazed upon made the blood curdle in their veins. Three men lay dead upon the floor, and five others, fearfully wounded, were groaning and cursing by their side. Half-drunken women, sobered by the ghastly sight, were screaming like bel-dams. For a while those of the gamblers who had escaped death or wounding at the hands of the Missourians were too utterly dazed by the sight of their dead and wounded comrades sweltering in pools of blood to take any action for revenge. Suddenly one of the gamblers shouted:

"Now, boys, for vengeance. Let's follow them to hell if necessary!" and with a yell of revenge ten stalwart gamblers put off in hot pursuit of the plucky Missourians.

The moon was shining brightly down upon the path of the fleeing ex-guerillas, and the maddened gamblers, made desperate by the death of their comrades, followed close and sure upon the heels of the fugitives.

About a mile away they overtook the four greenhorns from Missouri, as they considered the James boys and their two friends to be, and with a wild yell

of triumph dashed forward and demanded their surrender. "Surrender nothing!" cried Jesse, and, turning to his comrades, he said: "Let her go, boys!" and instantly four revolvers flashed in the moonlight and three more Battle Mountain gamblers joined the company of their departed comrades in the happy hunting grounds of disembodied shades. The seven remaining gamblers turned to retreat, but the ready revolvers of the Missourians flashed forth again, and two more of the Battle Mountain desperadoes fell to the earth wounded. The five others were glad to escape with their lives and whole skins. Jesse lost his hat in the encounter and one of the ex-guerillas had a finger shot off.

With these slight exceptions no damage was done to the brave quartet of Missourians, who had demonstrated their ability to do what they set out to do.

A man's life was as nothing when it stood in the way of Frank or Jesse Jams. The knowledge of this fact by the people constituted the James boys' most perfect safeguard.

But on their return trip from California the bandit brothers departed from their usual custom and traveled together. They had lived like gentlemen so long at their good old uncle's Hot Sulphur Springs Hotel that they became somewhat socialized and concluded not to abandon their new mode of life completely just yet awhile.

Frank and Jesse, you may imagine, traveled as first-class passengers. They had not exhausted their sup-



ply of greenbacks and gold obtained by them in their Russellville raid, and they proposed to experience something of the luxury of trans-continental travel. In this way they were thrown into the society of wealthy people traveling for the benefit of their health, and experienced no difficulty whatever in passing for well-bred gentlemen of the Pacific Coast.

They stopped over at Denver for a few days, and while there Frank was reconized by an ex-detective from Missouri named Ballintine. Ballintine was not inclined to let Frank James know that he understood who he was, but the latter stepped to the ex-detective on the street and, extending his hand, said: "Shake hands, my friend. Like myself, you seem to be having a 'lay-off' from your usual occupation. Can't you join Jesse and me in doing Denver for a day or two?" The result was that Ballentine, who was a little hard up just then, was treated to as jolly a three days' and nights' dissipation as he ever experienced in all his life. All the places of amusement, both reputable and disreputable, were visited by the trio, and, as the society reporter for a country newspaper sometimes says of a Sunday-school picnic, "A nice time was had."

It is said by some who pretend to know what they are talking about that Jesse even went so far in his good natured bantering as to make a visit to the detectives' headquarters and ask for a job, but this seems hardly probable, for a chance recognition by any of the Pinkerton force would certainly have resulted in Jesse's arrest. Jesse, of course, knew this, and as he

was no fool, it is not likely that he took any such reckless chances.

After enjoying themselves to their hearts' content in Chicago, the James boys went to Missouri to visit their mother. Of course, their conduct in the neighborhood of their old crimes was not so open and above board as while on their travels, but they felt perfectly safe at home, where their faithful and affectionate mother was ever on the alert against surprise.

The James boys were not altogether idle while at home, for they were thinking of new ways and means for replenishing their pretty well exhausted treasury. After a few days' rest they retired to their Jackson county cave, where with the advice and consent of a number of their old fellow-bandits, they speedily arranged a plan of campaign for another bank robbery.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

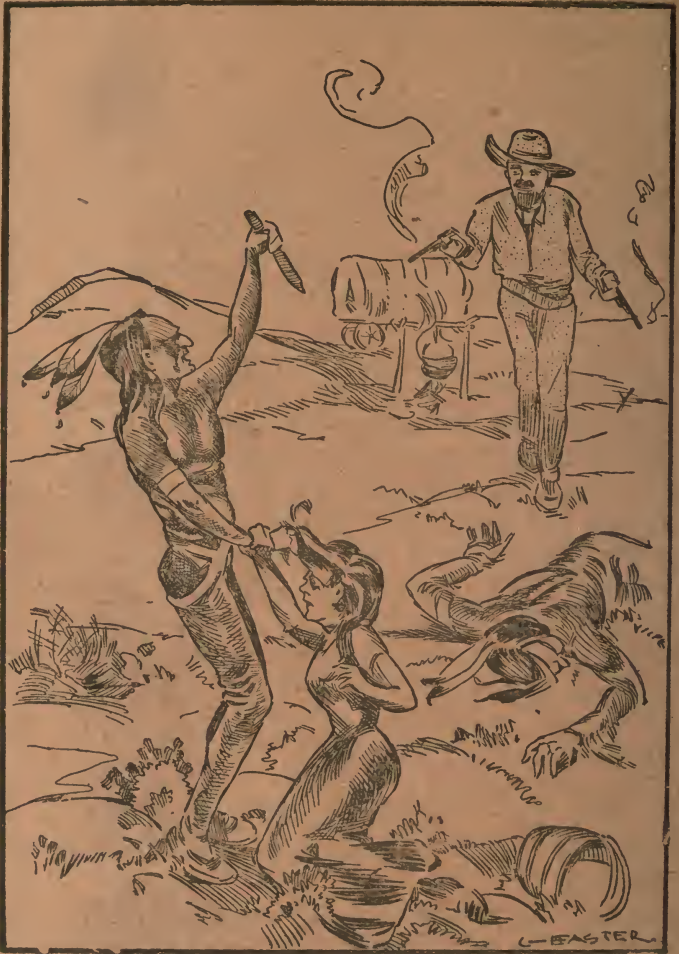
ONE OF THE FEW GOOD ACTS OF THEIR BLACK CAREERS, THEY BOLDLY ATTACK A BAND OF INDIANS, AND AT THE RISK OF THEIR OWN LIVES SAVE AN IMMIGRANT PARTY CROSSING THE PLAINS.

Black as was their career the James boys are entitled to the credit for at least one good deed, on the theory that the devil is entitled to his due. This notable instance of the fact that, despite their badness, some good still existed in their make-up occurred in Colorado. They were trailing slowly along one day when news came that the Indians were on the war-path and they had best keep a sharp lookout. A few hours later they discovered traces of Indians ahead of them, which, together with the presence of wagon tracks, plainly showed them that the murderous redskins were trailing the immigrant party to murder them all and steal their outfit.

"Can we make it?" asked Frank.

"We've got to make it," replied Jesse, with more than usual feeling. "Think of them poor women and kids."

They dug their spurs into their horses and rode like demons. On the way they picked up several other



plainsmen, who joined them. Ere long they came in sight of the distant band of pursuing Indians. It consisted of fourteen warriors, and they were slowly but surely closing in on the single wagon of the prairie schooner type. Rounding a point in the trail they saw the Indians preparing to attack the settlers.

Throwing themselves out of the saddles and grasping their revolvers, they started on a run with a yell as fearful as any red devil of them; they threw themselves among the yelling fiends. Panic-stricken and confused, as one after another bit the dust at the crack of the ready revolvers, the terrified savages scattered in all directions. A covered wagon stood in their way and the James boys could not see what was going on in the camp, but hearing a child scream out as if in its death agony, Jesse, with a six-shooter in either hand, sprang under the wagon and crawled out on the other side.

Two big Indians were doing deadly work. Jesse fired both revolvers in quick succession, emptying every chamber into the two Apache devils, and then rushed in to club the life out of them with the butts of his revolvers, if any yet remained in their infernal red skins.

Three minutes after the music began not a live Indian was in sight, and eight dead ones lay spread out on the ground.

After a breathing spell Frank and Jesse began to look about them. The little girl that screamed was

only slightly hurt, having been dropped to the ground by the stalwart Indian when Jesse shot him full of holes. Two other little children escaped unhurt, as did also three women of the party. The three men were all seriously wounded. Frank and Jesse escaped without a scratch.

Early in December the seven bandits returned to Missouri, thinking that, as had been usual, the excitement over their crimes had so far subsided as to permit them to visit their old homes and haunts. Their appearance in Clay county, at least the James boys, was noted on the 20th of January, 1875, and report of their return was at once made to Allen Pinkerton, who, after some correspondence with county officials and others, formed a plan for capturing the bandits.

## CHAPTER XXV.

## THE RAID AND TRAGEDY AT NORTHFIELD.

THE JAMES AND YOUNGER BROTHERS FORM A FOUR HANDED ALLIANCE AND SACK THE BANK OF NORTHFIELD, MINN., WITH DISASTROUS RESULTS.

After the long chain of train and bank robberies the James boys formed an alliance with the Younger brothers—Cole and James—and arranged for a raid in the town of Northfield, Minn., which seemed to offer an easy mark for a bank robbery and which place they had long been considering as a place for some daring work in the bandit line. The town consisted of some 2,000 inhabitants and is located on the Milwaukee and St. Paul railroad. A small stream runs through the town, known as the Cannon river, over which is a neat iron bridge and beside which are the big Ames flour mills.

The town is chiefly noted for the location of Carlton College, one of the finest educational institutions in the State.

Just before noon, on the day of the raid, three of the bandits dined at Jeff's restaurant, on the west side of Cannon river. After eating they talked politics,

and one of them offered to bet the restaurant man one hundred dollars that the State would go Democratic. The bet was not taken, and they rode across the bridge into the business part of the town, hitching their horses nearly in front of the First National Bank. They stood for some time talking leisurely near the corner. Suddenly there came like a whirlwind a rush of horsemen over the bridge. There were only three of them, but they made racket enough for a regiment. Riding into the square with whoops and oaths, they began firing revolvers and ordering everybody off the streets. Almost at the same moment two others rode down from the west, carrying out a similar program. It was a new experience for Northfield, and for a few minutes the slamming of front doors almost drowned the noise of the firing.

At the first sound of the onset the three men who first entered town—Jesse James, Charley Pitts and Bob Younger—had walked quickly into the bank and leaped nimbly over the counter. The cashier, J. L. Haywood, was at his place, and Frank Wilcox and A. E. Bunker, clerks, were at their desks. All were covered by the revolvers before they apprehended danger. The robbers stated that they intended to rob the bank. The cashier was commanded to open the safe, and bravely refused. The outer door of the vault was standing ajar, and the leader stepped in to try the inner door. As he did so Haywood jumped forward and tried to shut him in.

One of the others, afterwards found to be Charlie



Pitts, promptly arrested the movement. At this moment Bunker thought he saw a chance, and so he broke for the back door. The third robber, Bob Younger, followed and fired two shots, one of which took effect in the fugitive's shoulder. The others then insisted that Haywood should open the safe, and, putting a knife to his throat, said, "Open up, d—— you, or we'll slit you from ear to ear!" A slight cut was made to enforce the demand. Haywood still refused. Meantime the firing outside had commenced, and the men then began to cry out, "Hurry up! It's getting too hot here!" The three hastily ransacked the drawers, and finding only a lot of small change, jumped over the railing and ran out. Jesse James was the last to go, and as he was in the act of leaping from the counter he saw Haywood turn quickly to a drawer as if in the act of securing a weapon. Instantly the outlaw presented his pistol and shot the brave cashier dead.

The bullet penetrated the right temple and, ranging downward, lodged near the base of the brain. Haywood fell over without a groan, a quantity of his blood and brains staining the desk as he reeled in the death fall. The shot which struck Bunker entered his right shoulder at the point of the shoulder blade and passed through obliquely, producing only a flesh wound.

As the bandits rushed into the street they met a sight and reception quite unexpected. Recovering from their first surprise, the citizens began to exhibit

their pluck, and were ready to meet the outlaws half way in a deadly fight. A search for firearms was the first important step, and Dr. Wheeler, J. B. Hyde, L. Stacey, Mr. Manning and Mr. Bates each succeeded in procuring a weapon, which they expeditiously put into service. Dr. Wheeler, from a corner room (No. 8) in the Dampier House, with a breech-loading carbine, took deliberate aim at one of the bandits as he was mounting and sent a big slug through the outlaw's body. The dying man fell outwards into the street. An unknown Norwegian who came along the street was ordered to get out quick, but failing to understand the order was shot dead in the street.

Frank James had a cloth around his arm and was holding one hand in the other, the blood dripping from his fingers, while his horse was led by a comrade. This, of course, explains how it happened that they got away no faster. Had they abandoned the worst wounded ones to their fate, there is little doubt but that the others would have gotten away easily enough. As it was, the story of the chase abounds in incidents almost too marvelous for belief.

Every point, including St. Paul and Minneapolis, was immediately notified of the robbery by telegraph, and police officers, detectives and sheriffs' posses were sent out after the fleeing bandits in such numbers that it was thought impossible for any of the outlaws to escape.

Very soon rewards were offered for the apprehension of the desperadoes, which stimulated the already

active hunt. The State offered \$1,000 for the arrest of the six bandits, which offer was changed to \$1,000 for each of the gang, dead or alive; \$700 was offered by the Northfield bank and \$500 by the Winona and St. Peter Railroad.

A posse of fourteen men overtook the bandits on the night of the 11th in a ravine near Shieldsville, and fell back after a fight in which one of the robbers' horses was killed. The dismounted rider was immediately taken up behind one of the others and the band took to the woods.

More than 400 men turned out to cut them off. They got into a patch of timber at Lake Elysian and were run out of it the next day, and, though the scouting parties increased to a thousand, two days later the robbers had been completely lost.

The robbers got into a belt of timber, and, going through to the other side, saw a hunting party in a wagon, which they made a rush to capture. The men in the wagon instantly presented their shotguns, and the robbers, taking them for pursuers, went back into the brush. It so happened that the patch of timber they had struck was only about five acres in extent, and had bare, open ground all around it. Before they had discovered the disadvantage of their position the people began to flock in from all directions, in wagons, on foot, on horseback, equipped with shotguns and rifles. They soon established a cordon of one hundred and fifty men around the patch and began shooting into it to drive the game out. As the robbers paid no

attention to this, Sheriff Glispen called for volunteers to go in and stir them up.

He quickly secured a posse of determined men, and the battle was on. They raided the patch of woods, and a desperate fight ensued. Several of the robber band fell badly wounded, and two of the sheriff's posse were also laid low. Frank James was shot in the shoulder and Cole Younger got a bullet through the leg. His horse was also killed. After several days' fighting, however, the posse drew off and the robbers once more escaped and made their way to their respective homes.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## THE FAMOUS "BLUE-CUT" TRAIN HOLD-UP

HOW THE JAMES BOYS COMMITTED A DARING ROBBERY  
AND GOT AWAY WITH A BIG BOODLE IN QUICK ORDER.

One of the James boys most daring exploits which aroused the whole country and caused more newspaper publicity than any of their previous achievements was the famous "Blue Cut" train robbery on the Chicago & Alton Railroad.

The James boys and their band of robbers had become utterly reckless of consequences, both to themselves and their victims, and seemed bent on deeds of desperation and outrage that would throw all former acts of highwaymen and bandits completely in the shade. The murder of Westfall and McMillan seemed to whet their appetites for new deeds of murder and outrage, and they lost no time in tackling another train, this time going through the passengers as well as plundering the express cars.

About four miles east of Independence, Mo., where the Missouri Pacific Railroad crosses over a deep cut of the Chicago and Alton, is a point known as Blue Cut. At this point, on the night of September 7, 1881, the James boys and ten other bandits secretly

themselves and waited for the night express of the Chicago and Alton road to loom in sight.

About 9 o'clock the express train from Chicago, in charge of conductor Hazelbaker, came tearing along. Just before plunging into the deepest part of the cut the engineer descried on the track just ahead of him a pile of stones some five or six feet high, and of course at once reversed his engine.

As soon as the engine slowed down Jesse Jamees and four of his masked robbers confronted the engineer with drawn revolvers, and Jesse said: "Step down off that engine or I will kill you." The engineer lost no time in complying with the peremptory request, and was then commanded to get up again and get the coal pick, which he did, and was then, together with his fireman, marched off to the express car and ordered to break down the door. This request was also complied with under the persuasive influence of ready cocked revolvers.

The express messenger had climbed down out of his car at the first alarm and hid in the grass by the side of the road, but the bandits swore they would kill the engineer and fireman if the messenger failed to show up. The engineer called the express messenger to come forth, which he did, and entered the car with two of the robbers, who forced him to open the safe and pour the contents into a sack.

The robbers were disappointed in not getting more booty, and knocked the messenger down twice with the butt end of their revolvers, cutting his head in a

fearful manner. They then marched the engineer and messenger to the coaches, where they kept them covered with revolvers while they robbed the passengers.

They began business on the coaches by firing off a volley of revolver shots into the roof and sides of the car and savagely shouting: "Hold up your hands, and be pretty damned quick about it; we're going through the entire outfit."

They held up every passenger and robbed men and women alike, including those in the sleepers, and decamped with a two-bushel sack full of money and valuables. Before leaving Jesse James stepped up to the engineer, handed him a ten dollar bill and told him to "buy himself a drink in the morning," at the same time telling him he was a good fellow, but advising him to change his job to some eastern road if he valued his life.



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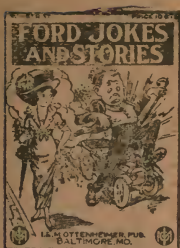
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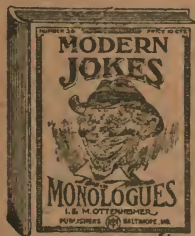
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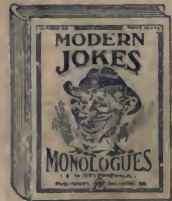
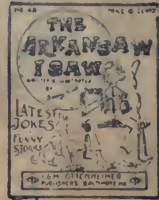
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